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N O T E S
ON THE
EARLIER HEBREW SCRIPTURES

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NOTES
ON THE
EARLIER HEBREW SCRIPTURES

BY
SIR G. B. AIRY, K.C.B.

'There seems no possible reason to be given, why we may not be in a state of moral probation, with regard to the exercise of our understanding upon the subject of religion, as we are with regard to our behaviour in common affairs'—BUTLER

'Men's moral probation may be, whether they will take due care to inform themselves by impartial consideration; and afterwards, whether they will act as the case requires, upon the evidence which they have, however doubtful'

BUTLER : *quoted also by PALEY*



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101 . j . 135 .

PREFACE.

THROUGH a long period, I have often been led to consider carefully the interpretation of several of the more obscure passages of the ancient Hebrew Scriptures. Some notes on these have been committed to writing many years ago, but without any view to publication. Lately, however, public events have occurred, which have induced me to refer to my manuscripts, to revise them, and to make additions to them. These events are, the publication of Dr. Donaldson's 'Book of Jasher,' that of the 'Essays and Reviews,' and that of Bishop Colenso's tracts on the 'Pentateuch'; and the controversies to which these works have given rise. In the face of these polemical discussions, I have thought that there might be advantage in collecting some speculations, formed in freedom of thought, but I trust not without reverence, and which, shaped as they have been in quiet privacy, may be expected to be, in great

measure, free from the exaggeration or the violence which may be induced by controversy.

In regard to the general tone of these notes, I will first remark that I have nothing to say on the subject of verbal inspiration. With those who entertain that doctrine, I can have nothing in common. Nor do I recognise, in the professedly historical accounts, any other inspiration which can exempt them from the severest criticism that would be applicable to so-called profane accounts, written under the same general circumstances, and in the same countries.

On the question of personal inspiration, at least, at special and important junctures, I am far from speaking so positively. It has been held by able metaphysicians, that every occurrence of a new thought to the mind may justly be considered an inspiration. And I am far from undertaking to say, that the Great Power who created Mind, with its incomprehensible mixture of involuntary thoughts and voluntary reasoning, may not on some fitting occasions, have strongly turned those thoughts in a definite direction.

I attach no importance to the citations in the New Testament, of names and events recorded, or

supposed to be recorded, in the Hebrew Scriptures ; beyond this, that the accounts to which allusion is made, were probably familiar to, and were received by, the persons to whom these citations were addressed.

It is scarcely necessary to say that I regard the ostensible familiarity of the historian with the counsels of the Omnipotent, as mere oriental allegories, expressing the religious profession of the writer, but possessing no other claim to attention.

As a general rule, I hold, that where any recorded event in the inanimate world can be explained by the ordinary phenomena of material nature (better understood at the present time, in reference to some instances, than in the time of the writers), or when any actions of men can be shewn to be compatible with the understood laws of human nature ; such events or actions are to be referred to their appropriate recognised laws, without the admission of miraculous explanation.

CONTENTS.



	PAGE
On the general correctness of the ascription of the books of the Pentateuch to Moses	1
On the nature of Mythical History, and on Traditions	9
The History of Moses	11
The History of the Creation	14
The History of the Fall	20
The murder of Abel	24
The punishment of Cain	29
The Legend of Lamech	32
The Deluge	35
On the histories of Abraham and Isaac, with remarks on the purchase of the burial-place and on the introduction of circumcision	47
On the temporary establishment of the Israelites in Egypt, and on the events which followed, to the vision of Moses in the burning bush on Horeb	51
On the interviews of Moses with the king of Egypt, and on the Plagues of Egypt	58
On the number of the Israelites at their departure from Egypt	67

	PAGE
On the passage of the Red Sea	70
On the geographical circumstances of the migration from the western branch of the Red Sea to the Land of Canaan . .	80
On the political circumstances of the Israelites during their migration from the Red Sea to the Land of Canaan . .	88
On the characters of the priests and the prophets of the Old Testament	99
On the 'Enquiring of God'	103
On some points in the political history of the Jews, from the rise of Samuel to the death of David	105
On the building of the Temple, and the general policy of Solomon's reign	115
On the foreign policy of the two divisions of the Israelite na- tion, after the reign of Solomon	120
Remarks on Bishop Colenso's examination of the Pentateuch .	122

NOTES

ON THE

EARLIER HEBREW SCRIPTURES.

ON THE GENERAL CORRECTNESS OF THE ASCRIPTION
OF THE BOOKS OF THE PENTATEUCH TO MOSES.

THE early Hebrew Scriptures, after giving a series of almost impersonal legends and of meagre family records, present us with a comparatively full and orderly history of a nation or tribe during the most critical period of its national existence. After a time, however, the history becomes less and less complete ; and at length we find that the historically illustrated period to which we have referred, remains almost as completely isolated from what precedes and from what follows, as does the period of early Greek history which is the principal subject of the Homeric poems.

This history relates (and various profane authors

have also preserved allusions to the same account) that Moses, a man well fitted for the task by his talents, his education, and the experience of his early life, raised his nation from a state of great debasement to one of comparative power and independence, conducting it with great general success through difficulties almost unparalleled, from slavery in one country to domination in another, and establishing in it a new form of religion, with a complicated system of liturgical rites. Tradition has (without any variation, as I believe) ascribed the composition of the history of these transactions to Moses; thereby meaning, as I conceive, that the actual putting together of the records may have been effected by the hands of other persons (some of whom may have outlived Moses), but still under the direct command of Moses himself; and not denying the possibility of small interpolations having been made in the course of subsequent ages.

An inspection of the general character of the record seems to give great plausibility to this tradition. The language and the degree of minuteness of the Israelitish history, from the first energetic expostulations with the Egyptian king, to the entrance into Canaan, are, to my mind, eminently those of a contemporaneous account. The details of interviews with the king, on the one hand, and of transactions with the en-

slaved people, on the other hand, can only have been known to the leader of the nation. The history of the occurrence at the burning bush (whatever difficulties may accompany it), and of other events nearly at the same time, can scarcely have been invented by another person. The character of the legends and histories in the beginning of the book, derived apparently in part from Egyptian and in part from Arabic tradition, agrees with what might be expected from the personal history of Moses. And, lastly, the near coincidence of the duration of accurate and connected history with the length of the life of Moses, adds strongly to the probability that the history was written by the immediate agents of Moses.

The arguments, therefore, for the truth of the established tradition appear to me so strong, that nothing short of irrefragable reasoning seems sufficient to destroy it.

In examining the subsequent history of the nation, three epochs present themselves, at which a tampering with the secular and ecclesiastical history of the nation appears possible. They are,

The time of Samuel;
The time of Solomon;
The time of Josiah.

These times have been adopted by different commentators as times at which the Pentateuch either has been composed or has been very greatly modified.

Bishop Colenso has fixed on the time of Samuel as the probable epoch for the nearly entire composition of the historical books. His arguments against their contemporaneous composition are mainly, that the numbers of the population are extravagantly great, and that there is some confusion about the introduction of the holy name *Jehovah*. And his reasons for fixing on the time of Samuel are; the general ability and influence of Samuel; and the fact of verbal criticism, that in the earlier psalms of David (who was closely associated with Samuel) the general word *Elohim* is usually found, whereas in the later psalms the name *Jehovah* is almost exclusively employed. This is coupled with the remark, that the names which occur in those parts of the Mosaic books which appear most ancient are usually compounded with El, whereas the names in parts suspected to be later interpolations, and those in times subsequent to David, are never compounded with El, but frequently with Jah.

I agree entirely with Dr. Colenso, that the numbers of population are vastly greater than can be tolerated; but I do not think this any argument against the original genuineness of the books in their

general form such as we have them now. Oriental imaginations are very prone to exaggerate, and to alter accounts in the direction of exaggerating, and numerals are very liable to error. Some numbers (such as the killing of 27,000 men by the falling of a wall) are made so ludicrously large, that their appearance is no small evidence of the honesty, though perhaps also of the unskilfulness, of the custodiers and copiers of the books.

An occasional disappearance and reappearance of the sacred Name appears to me not inconsistent with the intense reverence in which it was held by the Jews, and probably by their predecessors. We know that for many centuries the Name has been so completely banished from utterance that its pronunciation is totally lost. The same thing may have occurred more than once after the times of successive generations among the early fathers, and very probably indeed after the death of Moses, and while the Israelites lived in such an anarchical state till the time of Samuel and Saul.

There is undoubtedly a slight contradiction between the statement in the early chapters of Exodus, that the name Jehovah was not known to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the histories of Abraham and Isaac in Genesis, in which the name frequently occurs. But perhaps it is less than at first

sight appears. The real patriarch of the Jewish nation was Jacob, and in the history of Jacob, the name Jehovah scarcely occurs once, though Elohim occurs very many times. I think it not improbable that in the Exodus chapters the names Abraham and Isaac may have been interpolated.

On the whole, without asserting that every difficulty can be removed, I do not think those that remain sufficiently weighty to induce me to accept Dr. Colenso's conclusions, or to doubt the general date of the Pentateuch as of or very near to the time of Moses. The subject will be treated more fully in the final chapter.

The time of Solomon has been specially fixed on by Dr. Donaldson as the epoch at which the Hebrew Scriptures were generally brought into form, and in which many parts were composed. And it is impossible to doubt that some parts, such as the pretended prophecy of Balaam, were composed about that time, after David's Edomite conquest and before the separation of the ten tribes. But after giving careful consideration to the arguments in Dr. Donaldson's remarkable work ('Jashar'), I still retain the impression that there is no ground for doubting the historical and nearly contemporaneous character of the account of the escape from Egypt and the proceedings to the entry into Canaan, or the Mosaic character of the

tradition of the Deluge and the family traditions preceding and following it.

The time of Josiah and the high-priest Helkiah has been prominently brought forward by Volney and alluded to by Donaldson as the probable time of the composition of much of the Pentateuch, or at least of some of the ritual, and of some precepts of political character.

I scarcely doubt that the last verses of Deuteronomy, chap. xvii, were composed at that time. But I do not see reason to think that any important historical or ceremonial parts of the Pentateuch were then written or modified. (Since this was written, Bishop Colenso's investigations have made it extremely probable that the entire book of Deuteronomy was written about that time : but the arguments absolutely separate it from the Tetrateuch, and do not suggest the least alteration of those books.)

I do not allude at any length to the recension in the time of Ezra, because no critic, as I believe, has suggested that any addition to or modification of the Hebrew Books, as they then existed, was made at that time.

The reasons, on which I have but briefly touched above, have satisfied me that the so-called Mosaic Books are, in the main, really Mosaic Books ; in

great part compiled by or under the direction of Moses ; some parts, however, being written very shortly after his death, and some parts (unimportant to the general course of the narration) being afterwards interpolated. Assuming this, I shall now proceed to give my own opinions on the origin and interpretation of several parts of the Pentateuch.

ON THE NATURE OF MYTHICAL HISTORY AND
ON TRADITIONS.

As I shall have occasion several times to use the word *myth*, it may be convenient that I should state here the meaning which I shall attach to it. When the origin of a broad law of nature, or of an extensive national peculiarity, is ascribed in the first instance to facts stated as historical in the personal history of one or two individual persons, then I consider such ostensible history as a *myth*. It has not the most trifling claim to be considered as historical, or true, or as having any meaning whatever except that of condensing into a personal form some extensive law of nature. Its tendency will generally be given by the interest or the guiding theory of the narrator.

In using the word *traditions*, I shall confine the meaning of the word to special family histories and national histories; such as, in their nature, may apply, without departure from the ordinary laws of human proceedings, and, in fact, may or may not be true records of past events. The tendency of those preserved (which, probably, are only a part of those which have come down to the writer), as of

myths, will generally be given by the interest or leading theory.

Before examining accounts which, as relating to matters purporting to have occurred long before the age of the narrator, may be myths or may be traditions, it is necessary to enquire what were probably the interest and the guiding theory of the narrator. For this purpose, we must collect the principal events in the life of Moses.

THE HISTORY OF MOSES.

It is recorded, and there appears to be not the slightest reason for doubting the general accuracy of the record, that Moses was by birth a Hebrew or Israelite ; one of an Arab tribe which had been settled, under the patronage of some king of Egypt, in the district then called Goshen, but believed now to be the same which is at present called Wady Toumilat (a part of the province es-Shurkiyeh). It is stated that this tribe at the time of the birth of Moses, and to the end of their residence in that district, were grievously oppressed by the Egyptian government, especially in the infliction of forced labour. It is further recorded that Moses was educated, under the protection of the royal family, in the Egyptian court ; and a tradition is preserved by Josephus that he was employed in an important military command. Still it appears that his intercourse with his parent tribe was uninterrupted, and that his sympathies were entirely with them. After a homicide committed in the defence of an Israelite against an Egyptian, he fled to the land of Midian, the locality of which is a little doubtful, but which

appears to me to be on the northern edge of the desert of the Sinaitic peninsula. It is very probable that, during a long residence in this land, he visited the land of Canaan; for the precision of some of the descriptions (as of the cave of Machpelah), and the account of some of the natural characteristics of the country (as Exodus iii 8, xxxiii. 3, Leviticus xxvi. 3, perhaps Deuteronomy viii. 9, and xi. 11), with the general vividness of the impressions on 'the land flowing with milk and honey,' seem to be those of a person who had himself viewed these scenes. Even if he did not personally visit the country, his proximity to it would enable him to acquire much information on it. He returned to Egypt by way of Sinai (of which we shall have to speak again); and, uniting his people under the band of a new religion, and displaying high practical talent and undoubted patriotism, he succeeded after great difficulties in leading the whole tribe into the desert which he knew so well, and, after many years' delay, established them on the borders of the land of Canaan, in which, from the first, he had proposed to settle them.

From these facts of personal history it is sufficiently plain that Moses, before the time of his active interference with the religion, the government, and the migration of the Hebrews, had had ample opportunities of becoming acquainted with the religious

doctrines and the myths of the two nations, Egyptian and Hebrew. These, as pertaining to peoples of two totally different classes—one long settled, the other migratory—one agricultural, the other pastoral—one worshipping numerous gods, the other probably (at least in olden times) recognising only one God—would be different. He had also had opportunities of collecting the genealogies and traditions of the patriarchs of his race. And he had been able to inform himself on the character of the district to which he proposed to lead his countrymen. From these considerations, taken in conjunction with some of the internal ordinances of Moses, we shall perhaps be able to explain some points which are otherwise obscure.

THE HISTORY OF THE CREATION.

THE book of Genesis opens with two histories of the Creation, evidently from two totally different sources.

The first, ending with chapter ii. verse 3, is entirely Elohist. It ascribes the Creation to the Gods or the Great Powers, in the plural number, as is recognised by all Hebrew scholars. (The English Version is on this point slightly inaccurate.) It is the production of a writer who seems to possess an acquaintance with natural history, and might almost be suspected of knowing some facts of geology. But his astronomy is greatly in error. He speaks of the formation of a solid structure or firmament (the Hebrew word, I believe, necessarily implies solidity of structure, as do also the Greek word, (LXX) στερέωμα, the Latin word *firmamentum*, and the English word *firmament*) called 'heaven,' or rather 'sky,' which supports waters. The creation of man follows that of all plants and all other animals. The creation of the two sexes is passed over in the words 'male and female created he them.' The striking feature in this account is the division of the work of creation

into six days, and the resting of the creating gods on the seventh day.

I imagine this account to be Egyptian. It is sufficiently clear, from consideration of the great error which I have indicated, that it is not either divine or historical; it may be a tradition or a myth. The general conception of the position of the earth, with 'water above the earth,' agrees closely with that of an Egyptian picture published by Bonomi.

The second history begins at chapter ii. verse 4, and closes, as regards the Creation, at the end, or rather at the 24th verse, of that chapter, though it is continued, as regards other transactions, to the end of chapter iv. It is Jehovistic throughout; every divine act is ascribed to Jehovah (the LORD in the English Version). The fixation of the place of Eden as near the sources of the Pison (a river not certainly known, but apparently near the Tigris, Ecclesiasticus xxiv. 25), the Gihon, the Hiddekel (Tigris), and the Euphrates, implies that its position¹ was somewhere

¹ The Pison is mentioned in conjunction with the land of Havilah, which in the LXX is called Euilat. The similarity of sounds suggests that the river of this country (the Pison) may be the Eulæus, a large river which drains the whole of Northern Media, and ultimately falls into the Tigris. If it be so, then we have three of the rivers mentioned in the text flowing from sources in the Armenian heights; and the fourth will do so if the Gihon is the same as the Araxes on the west side of the Caspian Sea (not the Araxes of Herodotus, which seems to be on the east side, or to correspond to the Oxus). This appears to me very probable. In that case the land called Cush (improperly translated

on the mountain-lands extending from Armenia towards the Hindoo Cosh, and seems to leave no doubt that this account is Arabian or Oriental. It makes no mention of the seven days of creation. It mentions man as created probably before the plants, undoubtedly before the animals. It describes the creation of woman as effected by taking a rib out of man.

This account differs much from the former. Though it contains no error of cosmical science, as does the former, yet I suppose that no person will accept it as a historical record, especially if reasons can be shown for the retention of it by Moses as a myth.

What, then, can have been the object of Moses in keeping these two discordant accounts at the head of his book? To answer this we must refer to the religious and civil legislation of Moses.

The first precept of Moses for the civil conduct of men, only fourth in the Ten Great Commandments, contained the institution, the blessed institution, of the hebdomadal rest. The importance which Moses

Ethiopia) would be the modern Aderbijan; and this will explain the importance of the march of Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, 2 Kings xix. 9, and Isaiah xxxvii. 9, which occasioned the retreat of Sennacherib from Judæa. Adopting these suppositions, the locality assigned to Eden is the southern part of modern Georgia.

It is remarkable that the name Cush in Hebrew, like the name Ethiopia in Greek, appears to have been applied in a later age to a different locality.

attached to it is evident ; and, with all reverence, I recognise to the utmost possible degree the justness of his views. No direction was given for religious ceremonial ; but it was probably seen that the health given to the mind, by a rest from ordinary cares and by the opportunity of meditation, could not fail to have a most beneficial religious effect. But, to give sanction to this precept, the authority of at least a myth was requisite. I believe it was simply for this reason that the myth of the six days of creation was preserved. It is expressly cited, in the first delivery of the commandment, Exodus, chapter xx., and in chapter xxxi. 17, as the solemn authority for the command. It is remarkable that, at the second mention of the commandment, Deuteronomy, chapter v., no reference is made to the creation ; perhaps, after the complete establishment of Jehovistic ideas in the minds of the Israelites, they had nearly lost the recollection of the Elohist account, and it was not thought desirable to refer to it.

In the second history, the mode of creation of woman is expressly given as mythical ; that is, as a special statement in a historical form, explaining and commanding a general law, ‘*Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife.*’ This is undoubtedly kept by Moses, as supporting his policy in maintaining, directly and

indirectly, the sanctity of marriage. One of the Ten Great Commandments denounces the violation of the holy bond. It might at first sight appear that the license of divorce given in Deuteronomy, chapter xxiv., is opposed to this sanctity; and, if introduced now, it would undoubtedly be so. But, among the people to whom it was introduced then, I doubt whether it was so; and the express provision, that a woman could not be handed backwards and forwards, would tend much to secure her position. Then it is to be remarked that the indulgence of mens' passions, sanctioned by the practice of every so-called civilised country, was denied to the Israelites (Deuteronomy xxiii. 17); that seduction was to be followed by marriage (xxii. 28); that even the person of a female captive was very much protected (xxi. 11). All these provisions tend greatly to make the position of woman in marriage secure. I conceive therefore that it was one of the first objects of Moses, in establishing the laws of society among the Israelites, to confirm the solemnity of marriage; and that for this purpose only, or chiefly, the second history of creation was preserved.

Since these paragraphs were written, Bishop Colenso's book has appeared, giving very strong reasons for the belief that the book of Deuteronomy

was written at a much later time than the other books, not improbably by Jeremiah. If this be considered as established, arguments founded on the precepts in Deuteronomy lose much of their literal force. But they do not lose the whole; for it appears very probable, from the language of these precepts and from their general consentaneity with others, that they have descended from the time when the Israelites invaded Canaan. The spirit of the passages cited above is fully conveyed in Exodus xxii. 16, one of the earliest of the ordinances of Moses.

THE HISTORY OF THE FALL.

MOST remarkable is this attempt, the earliest known, to explain the origin of evil. To accept it as a historical account, where all that precedes it (as has been seen), and all that follows it for some distance (as will be seen), are mythical, is quite out of question. It is evidently a mythical or allegorical suggestion of some tendency, connected with the deepest laws of human nature, the indulgence of which, beyond due limits, produces debasement and misery.

In forming a judgment on the correct interpretation of this account, I have derived much assistance from the speculations of Dr. Donaldson. I accept entirely his views on the main object of the moral legislation of Moses. But I do not accept in the same manner his more detailed speculations. The introduction of the serpent as the tempter, may be but a myth explaining the horror which the Egyptians entertained of the winged serpents (Herodotus II. 75), of which their detestation must have been intense, as is proved by the circumstance of their embalming and canonising the ibis, which destroyed

those serpents. But this departure from Dr. Donaldson's most important detail, does not prevent me from adopting the broad grounds of his general explanation.

In reading the laws of Moses, it is impossible to avoid noticing the prominence and the severity of the enactments, against unnatural and immodest crimes. And we cannot help remarking, on the first occasion of the Israelites coming into contact with a nation in some degree civilised, the horror which is repeatedly expressed of the rites of Baal-peor, or Belphegor. These rites, as is abundantly shown, were licentious ceremonials, with processions resembling the Phallic processions of the Greeks. Various mythical or legendary histories in the Pentateuch (as the history of Onan, and the indecency of Ham, the father of Canaan), convey the same reprobation of crimes against modesty or nature. And on the whole it becomes evident, that the great point in the moral legislation of Moses, was the preservation of sexual purity.

The restraints imposed by modern delicacy on the terms of critical discussion, render it difficult to enter into the conjectural explanation of accounts, which, even in allegory, are expressed with the freedom of ancient, and especially oriental, ideas and language. It cannot however, escape the notice of any

reader, that the association in guilt of the man and the woman, and the new acquirement of the perception of nakedness and of the sense of personal modesty, point to the commission of some corresponding crime. But even without referring to these considerations, the reflection of the most active thinkers has led them to analogous conclusions. The severe Milton, though not departing from the account of plucking and eating the fruit, has closely connected it with the yielding to lust. The profligate Byron has used the expression 'the tree of Good and Evil is plucked,' to denote the effect of giving way to the tyrant passion.

I do therefore receive this as the interpreted account of the Fall,—that mankind was degraded by some grievous sin against sexual purity.¹ And I think the reasons which urged Moses to preserve this account in so conspicuous a position were ;—that, in the moral education of the nation whom circumstances had placed under his direction, he desired as the first and greatest virtue, and the virtue which above all others gives to the human character dignity and uprightness, that they should be free from those dreadful crimes ; and that these crimes prevailed fearfully

¹ Perhaps it is not necessary to consider the terms *man* and *woman* as implying adult age or age above puberty, and the sin may have been premature union. This brutality was found, by the enquiries of a Royal Commission, to exist among the mining population of Britain.

among the peoples with whom his nation was first to come in contact, and among those whom he intended to dispossess of their lands in order to establish there his own nation.

The sentiment of the verse Genesis iii. 22, is very remarkable. I imagine it to be Indian. It corresponds exactly with the leading idea of Southey's 'Kehama.'

THE MURDER OF ABEL.

‘AND Eve bare Cain. . . . And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. . . . And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering ; but unto Cain and his offering he had not respect. . . . And Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.’ These are the essential parts of the account. There are some intermediate sentences, which are not well understood, but it seems unlikely that they would in any degree qualify these main facts.

To Western Europeans, who read this history, the striking feature in it is, that in the earliest family one brother killed another. But it was not so to the Arab tribe who had been residing, jealously watched and much oppressed, in Egypt, and who escaped to wander in the Desert. To them the striking feature was that ‘Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.’ Here we have sufficiently marked the distinction between the wandering sheep-feeder and the settled agriculturist ; a distinction marked in ancient (and partly in modern) times,

especially in the East, by ferocious hostilities of which we have scarcely an idea.

To readers of the ancient writers, this division of mankind into the two hostile classes is well known. But it may be well to cite from some modern epitomizers a few instances which condense many long accounts. Gibbon, chap. xxvi., says : ' The thrones of Asia have been repeatedly overturned by the shepherds of the North ; and their arms have spread terror and devastation over the most fertile and warlike countries of Europe.' ' The conquest of China has been twice achieved by the pastoral tribes of the North ;' one of these tribes was the Huns, who, afterwards, conquered every thing as far as Rome. And, chap. xxxiv. ' In all their invasions of the civilised empires of the South, the Scythian shepherds have been uniformly actuated by a savage and destructive spirit.' More than four millions of persons were murdered by Zinghis Khan, in one tract of not very great extent. Gillies (*History of the World, Alexander to Augustus*), ' Not to mention the tradition that Asia had been thrice conquered by Scythians before the building of Nineveh, the father of profane history records their desolating migrations southward, B.C. 628.' ' If the Scythians often descended in terror from their cold mountains, the shepherds of Arabia and Ethiopia emerged with as successful bold-

ness from their scorching plains.' Egypt had been conquered by shepherd kings. And Malcolm, 'History of Persia,' chap. x., 'Every male of this great country [of the Tartars] is a soldier.' 'They are a moving nation of soldiers.' 'All their wealth, which consists in horses, camels, and sheep, accompany their march.' And chap. vi. 'The Scythians of the Greeks differ in no essential degree from the Tartars of modern history.' The armies of Mahomet, of Zinghis, and of Tamerlane, were of people of the same race. The atrocities of the shepherd-race naturally produced hatred in the agricultural race.

The account before us is, therefore, simply a myth, explaining the hostility between the 'feeders of sheep' and the 'tillers of the ground' as having originated in the earliest times. But it is represented that the 'tiller of the ground' was the guilty person in the quarrel : it is also intimated that the 'keeper of sheep' was in higher favour with the Deity. The explanation of this will be easily seen. It is to be remarked that the account is Jehovistic, connected with a preceding Jehovistic account which is certainly of Arabic or Armenian origin.

The Israelites, a nation of sheep-feeders, had been for a considerable time in a hostile position towards the Egyptians, a nation of tillers of the ground. They were going to wander as sheep-feeders in the Desert

(or may have been wandering there when this myth was established in the book of Moses), and, at the first convenient time they were to attack the Canaanites, a nation of tillers of the ground. It seemed desirable that they should have some pretence for doing so ; and one was found in the belief that, from the earliest ages, the agriculturist had, when opportunity was favourable, oppressed the shepherd; and therefore, at any time, the shepherd tribe was entitled to revenge itself on any agricultural tribe. A pretence of similar character was, according to Sir W. Scott, put forward as justifying the incursions of the Highlanders upon the Lowlanders :—

The stranger came, with iron hand,
And from our fathers rent the land.

.
Where live the mountain chiefs, who hold
That plundering lowland field and fold
Is aught but retribution due?

And, to the present time (Sale's Koran, Preliminary Introduction), the Arabs excuse themselves for their robberies by alleging the hard usage of their father Ishmael, who, being turned out of doors by Abraham, had the open plains and deserts given him by God for his patrimony, with permission to take whatever he could find there.

The interpretation of the history of Cain and Abel,

and the reason for recording it, are now, I think sufficiently clear.

Since this was written, I have remarked that the same general explanation has been suggested in a few words by Schiller.

THE PUNISHMENT OF CAIN.

‘And the LORD¹ said . . . a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth. And Cain said unto the LORD . . . it shall come to pass that every one that findeth me shall slay me. And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.’

I TAKE this passage as distinct from that which precedes it, because, though flowing from that which precedes, and affected by its circumstances, it has its own peculiar features, which require separate examination.

Ostensibly, it gives the history of the first judicial condemnation for homicide. The introductory words in the account of the homicide, ‘And Cain talked with Abel his brother, &c.,’ seem to imply that the crime was not meditated murder, but homicide in a quarrel. And the judgment was, that the criminal was to be banished, but was not to be capitally punished.

¹ In this and other places I retain the name as translated in the English Version ‘the LORD.’ But, in correctness, the word ought always to be ‘JEHOVAH.’

I am not certain whether there is, in the laws of Moses, any provision for circumstances exactly resembling these; for I think it possible, but not certain, that Exodus xxi. 13, may relate to the case next to be considered. But I think that it harmonises well with the spirit of his legislation. Jehovah is described, Exodus xxxiv. 6, as 'The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.' And the criminal legislation of Moses appears to me to be very humane, as compared with that which probably existed among the wild tribes of the desert, and possibly among the Israelites. Crime against the person must be punished, and murder must be punished with death; but the amount of punishment in Exodus xxi. 23, &c., and Leviticus xxiv. 17, &c., appears to me to be reduced to the minimum. Life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, &c., appear to me to be the very smallest penalties to which it would be possible to restrain a half-savage people, and for this a holy myth would be required. I should expect that among their neighbours the rule would be, two eyes for an eye, two teeth for a tooth, &c., and very probably, two lives for a life. This is the rule that has been laid down by some savage tribes, when one of their number has been killed in a fray with Europeans.

I conceive, therefore, that the object of this myth was to enforce the limitation of punishment, in cases of homicide perpetrated in anger, but without contemplation of murder. This perhaps will be supported by the next following history.

I may remark in passing, that the relation of Cain's fear of being murdered, of his journey and foundation of a city, &c., appear to be irreconcilable with the idea that the family of Adam were the sole inhabitants of the world.

THE LEGEND OF LAMECH.

‘And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice, ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech; for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt; If Cain shall be avenged seven-fold, truly Lamech seventy-and-seven-fold.’

OF the incident which led to this saying of Lamech we know nothing more than is stated here. But it seems to be intended to convey the idea, that Lamech had killed a man by accident, or, perhaps, in haste; and the object of the myth clearly is to lay down the rule that, in cases of accidental or hasty destruction of life, vengeance is not to pursue the innocent cause of the unintended death.

This maxim agrees most remarkably with the legislation of Moses.

In Numbers xxxv. 6, is the first order, given by Moses in the plains of Moab, for the establishment of six cities of refuge; and in verse 9, the order is repeated, ‘When ye be come over Jordan into the land of Canaan, then ye shall appoint you cities to be cities of refuge for you, that the slayer may flee thither which killeth any person at unawares:’ there

were to be three cities on each side of Jordan. And then follow most precise regulations for the enquiry into the case and its further treatment. In Deuteronomy iv. 41, as soon as the Israelites were settled on the east side of Jordan, three cities were selected; Bezer, Ramoth-Gilead, and Golan. In Deuteronomy xix., the order for three cities to be selected, when they should have crossed Jordan, is repeated. In Joshua xx. 7, is the record of the execution of this order by Joshua, the cities selected being Kedesch, Shechem, and Hebron.

We cannot too much admire the humanity of this regulation, the judgment of Moses in adopting it as fitted for the rude people whom he was leading, and the earnestness with which he pressed its practical establishment at the very earliest moment.

It appears thus, that the history of Lamech is a mere myth, floating down from some distant age, and preserved by Moses as a sanction for the beneficent measures which he was anxious to enforce.

The succession of mythical Jehovistic histories which began in Genesis, chapter ii. 4, seems to terminate at the end of chapter iv. It closes with the remarkable words 'Then began men to call upon the name of Jehovah,' or, 'Then began men to call themselves by the name of Jehovah.' In the LXX it is,

'He (Enos) hoped to call upon the name of Jehovah, the God.' I should think that at this time (in an age of unknown antiquity), a religious revolution occurred somewhat similar to that of Moses, in which the worship of One God was introduced or restored, and for which the preceding myths were collected as the sacred history without which a new religion cannot be established. Enoch may probably have been a character resembling Zoroaster.

After this there is perhaps nothing which can properly be called mythical. The reign of tradition now begins. There are, however, some incidents referred to the accounts of historical or quasi-historical individuals, which are made the foundation of ordinances in the age of Moses.

The fifth chapter, which is connected with ch. vi. 9, seems to be merely a repetition of the genealogies which precede it, with an addition of so many traditional genealogies as will connect them with the history of Noah, to which the fifth chapter properly belongs. Of the tradition of the demigods which occupies the first four verses of the sixth chapter, I can give no account. It might apparently be omitted without causing any interruption in the history.

THE DELUGE.

It is supposed by some of the commentators to whom I have referred, that the account of the Deluge is wholly, or partly, allegorical. To this opinion I cannot assent. Omitting all the introductory part of revelations of the Divine intentions, communications of professed Divine commands, collection of animals of every kind, &c., the account of the Deluge is given with a degree of minuteness as to times, measures, and changes, which shows clearly that it professes to be a veritable contemporaneous history. And I have no doubt that it is truly a contemporaneous history, the oldest now in existence; and that it has been written by a man whose powers for accurate observation and precise record were of a high order. The translation in the English Bible, however, if confidence can be placed in that of the Septuagint, is singularly bad; and in order to enable us justly to interpret the account, it will be necessary to give a new translation of all the essential parts.

It is to be remarked that the account of the different stages of the Deluge refers with great precision to the interval elapsed since the beginning

of the year ; but we are left without any information as to the season at which the year really did begin. And I cannot find that we have received from ancient writers any authoritative statement of the time of beginning of the year, in ages anterior to the Exodus. The idea, that the Egyptian year began at the autumnal equinox, appears to be a pure conjecture of Calvisius, or some other modern writer, without a single word of antiquity to support it. The first year of Moses appears certainly to have begun about the spring equinox ; and the ordinances for various feasts in Leviticus xxiii., and Deuteronomy xvi., seem to imply such a connexion between the feasts and the seasons, that the beginning of the year must have continued in the same season (as it has, for ecclesiastical purposes, in later times). It seems not improbable that this vernal commencement may have come from a much earlier age ; and we may with propriety make trial of it for interpretation of the account of the Deluge.

In order to give clearness to the account, I shall refer the dates to the same denominations of months, and the same positions of months in the natural year, which would have existed if the Gregorian style had been then in use. I shall adopt for the commencement of Noah's year, March 21. This will make all natural phenomena which depend on the season,

comparable with those of the present age. It will readily be seen, on comparing different parts of the account, that the length of the month is thirty days. The Septuagint account makes every occurrence ten days later than the Hebrew account; in the following translation I retain the Hebrew dates. I assume the length of the cubit to be $21\frac{7}{8}$ inches.

Genesis vii. 11. In the second month, the seventeenth (LXX 'twenty-seventh') day of the month, all the fountains of the deep were burst open, and the cataracts of the sky were opened.

Supposing the year to begin on March 21, the day here mentioned is May 6.

12. And the rain was upon the land forty days and forty nights.

17. And the flood [of rain] was forty days and forty nights upon the land.

This appears to be merely a repetition of verse 12.

17. And the water increased.

This appears to mean that, at the end of the forty days' rain, the water of the river, sea, or whatever the principal collection of water might be, began to rise. It is to be remarked that the *rain*, the *flood*, and the *water*, are carefully distinguished. The time at which the water began to rise is probably June 15. The numeral forty, however, often appears to be indefinite.

17. And lifted up the ark [or box], and it was raised from the ground.

This is in continuation of the history of the effect of the increase of the water, relating what took place after a certain time.

18. And the water prevailed, and increased greatly over the ground, and the ark was borne on the top of the water.

19. And the water prevailed very greatly over the land, and covered all the high mountains which were under the sky.

The word for the elevations of land is the word commonly used for mountains, but it will soon be seen that the elevation must be extremely limited. The word 'eminences' would have been preferable.

20. Fifteen cubits upwards was the water raised up, and it covered up all the high eminences.

The word for 'raised up' is most distinctly and certainly 'was elevated,' without reference in itself to any covering of the ground. And thus the account resolves itself simply into this;—that the water of the river, sea, and other collections of water rose fifteen cubits, or twenty-seven feet four inches. The 'mountains' or 'eminences' therefore were merely inequalities of the ground, less than 27 feet in height, and the country was extremely flat.

24. And the water was raised over the land one hundred and fifty days.

The tense implies that the rise was still going on through this time.

viii. 3 and 4. And the water was yielding [or 'began to yield'], and the water was being diminished [or 'began to be diminished'] after one hundred and fifty days; and the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth (LXX 'twenty-seventh') day of the month upon the mountain Ararat.

The expression in ch. vii. 24, might have led us to suppose that the rise of the water lasted 150 days, as measured from the beginning of the rise in ch. vii. 17, which we have assigned as probably occurring about June 14. But the date in ch. viii. 3, which is five months or 150 days after the first date in ch. vii. 11, shows that it is from that time that we must reckon. The end of the rise, or the greatest height of the water, occurred on October 3, and at this time the ark rested on the 'mountain' Ararat, at a part less than 27 feet in height.

5. And the water was being diminished till the tenth month. And in the tenth month, the first day of the month, the heads of the mountains were seen.

This was about December 16. The ark had been now more than ten weeks on the 'mountain' Ararat. It is plain, therefore, that the 'mountains' which now came into sight, and which are the same as those

mentioned in ch. vii. 19, were merely the small inequalities of the plain.

13. In the first month, the first day of the month, the water left the land, (or 'failed from the land').

About March 21 of the following year.

14. In the second month, the seven and twentieth day of the month, the land was perfectly dried up.

About May 17.

We may now examine whether there is any well-known local phenomenon, with which this account can be compared.

The seasons of Egypt depend mainly upon the Nile. This river, in ordinary years, begins to rise between June 21 and June 30; it has attained half its rise about August 15; and has reached its greatest height between September 20 and September 30, and remains at that height without sensible alteration for 15 days. It then begins to descend, and has made half of its descent by about November 10; it then descends very gradually, but sensibly, to May 20, after which the surface remains unaltered to the next solstice. During the flood the whole of the Delta of Lower Egypt, to a breadth of about 50 by 100 miles, is under water, with the exception of some embankment of water-reservoirs, and small eminences on which dwellings and stores are built. If the flood

is unusually small, the land is not sufficiently covered, and is partially barren for the next year ; if the flood is unusually large, the eminences are covered, and the most fearful distress is produced ; men and cattle are drowned, storehouses and mud cottages are swept away, and everything standing is destroyed, and the ground is left in a state which usually produces pestilence. (See the note at the end of this chapter.) Bruce has remarked that in thirty years there was only one instance of scarcity from insufficient flood of the Nile ; but there were three instances of famine and emigration of the inhabitants, produced by excessive floods. The flood in 1861 did very great mischief ; that of 1863 caused great alarm. Lepère in his 'Memoir on Egypt' has given the following numbers in illustration of the dependence of the safety and prosperity of the people on the height of the rise of the Nile :

When the rise is below 5·4 mètres (or 17 ft. 9 in.) ; there will be famine.

From 5·4 to 6·0 mètres (17 ft. 9 in. to 19 ft. 8 in.) ; insufficient flood, scarcity.

From 6·0 to 7·0 mètres, (19 ft. 8 in. to 23 ft. 0 in.) ; small flood.

From 7·0 to 7·5 mètres, (23 ft. 0 in. to 24 ft. 7 in.) ; favourable flood, abundance.

From 7·5 to 8·0 mètres (24 ft. 7 in. to 26 ft. 3 in.) ;

strong flood, becoming more and more injurious with every additional rise.

Above 8·0 mètres, (26 ft. 3 in.) ; flood extremely injurious, certain famine, danger of pestilence.

On the fall of the flood, different parts of the ground are successively revealed, and the operation of sowing is begun immediately. In some places, the seed can be thrust into the wet mud about the beginning of November, but in other places it is much later before the water leaves the ground. In the plain of Syout (some distance above the Delta), the French found the water half a mètre deep on the 15th of February. In other places where (as happens in all alluvial countries, and particularly in Egypt, see Russegger, i. 252) the river banks are higher than the land further from the river, the water may lie on the land long after the fall of the river ; and this is very likely to happen when the inhabitants have been destroyed or driven away, and there are no persons to cut channels through the banks.

Herodotus has preserved a tradition, which appears very likely to be true, that in former times, a less flood would cover the Delta than in later years. And thus a flood of 27 ft. 4 in. in a distant age, would be far more terrible than the worst mentioned by Lepère.

We can now institute the following comparison.

In Noah's flood

The rise of the water seems to have begun about June 15 (LXX June 25).

The water rose 27ft. 4in.

The greatest height occurred on October 3.

Inequalities of the ground were seen about December 16.

The water was gone about March 21.

The land was desiccated about May 17.

In the Nile

The rise begins between June 21 and June 30.

In a destructive flood, the water rises more than 26ft. 3in.; and a rise of 27ft. 4in., especially in a distant age, would be dreadfully destructive.

The greatest height occurs about September 30.

Parts of the land are uncovered at that time.

After a heavy and destructive flood, the water would probably have run off the ground about this time.

After a very heavy flood, this would probably represent the state of the ground.

I cannot entertain the smallest doubt that the flood of Noah was a flood of the Nile. The mountains Ararat must have been the hills skirting the Nile valley, most likely those on the eastern side, as facilitating the conjectural migration to Canaan, to

be shortly mentioned. I am not aware of the slightest authority for interpreting the mountains of Ararat to be mountains of Armenia or any other country than the borders of Egypt.

Remarking that the language of the account is on the whole Elohistic, I am inclined to think that Noah was an Egyptian, who probably, after loss of possessions in consequence of the terrible Nile flood, migrated to Canaan. The following incidental notices appear to support this idea :

After the flood, Noah saw the rainbow ; that is to say, he migrated from a country where there is little rain, to a county where rain is more common. There is very little rain in Egypt, but there is rain in Canaan (Deut. xi. 11, 1 Samuel xii. 18, 1 Kings xviii. 41, &c.).

After the flood, flesh was to be eaten (Gen. ix. 3). It would seem that the diet in Egypt was almost exclusively vegetable (Numbers xi. 5), for though 'flesh-pots' are mentioned (Exodus xvi. 3), no particular flesh is named, and the general word may not fully bear the meaning given to it. In the land of Canaan and its neighbourhood, we have no reason to suppose that the food was in any great degree vegetable.

After the flood, Noah planted vines ; and this implies that he had not planted vines formerly. There

are no vines in Lower Egypt, but there are vines in Canaan.

I shall conclude this chapter with a remark on the recorded dispersion of mankind following the flood.

It has been the opinion of some critics, that confusion has arisen in the myths and traditions, between Adam and Noah. And the recorded course of population seems in some measure to justify it. Adam was driven from Eden, which, wherever we place it (we have fixed upon Georgia), was near the land of Cush (which we conceive to be Aderbijan). And one of the most important branches of the Noachian dispersion, was that which began with Cush (Gen. x. 7), and which peopled Havilah (Media), Nimrod (Lower Mesopotamia), and other neighbouring countries. I interpret without scruple the filial relation of persons as meaning the colonial relation of tribes.

There is no reason to think that the confusion of tongues at Babel was intended to apply further than the inhabitants of a limited district.

Note to which reference is made in the preceding chapter.

Belzoni has given the following account of the Nile-flood of 1818.

‘The Nile rose this season $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet above the highest mark left by the former inundation, with uncommon rapidity, and carried off several villages and some hundreds of their inhabitants. I never saw any picture that could give a more correct idea of a deluge than the valley of the Nile in this season The Arabs generally erect fences of earth and reeds round their villages, to keep the water from their houses; but the force of this inundation baffled all their efforts. Their cottages, being built of earth, could not stand one instant against the current, and no sooner did the water reach them, than it levelled them with the ground It appeared to me to be in the midst of a vast lake containing various islands and magnificent edifices.’ A long description of the dangers of different villages follows.

ON THE HISTORIES OF ABRAHAM AND ISAAC, WITH
REMARKS ON THE PURCHASE OF THE BURIAL-
PLACE, AND ON THE INTRODUCTION OF CIRCUM-
CISION.

IN reading the account of the transactions between Abraham and Pharaoh and Abimelech, and between Isaac and Abimelech, and the expulsion of Ishmael by one, and (in effect) of Esau by the other, it seems impossible to avoid the conclusion that we have a mere repetition of histories; that in fact there is no trustworthy history at all; that part of the account is mythical, intended to offer a justification for the hostile habits of the tribes of the desert; and the rest of it is such mere tradition, that we are justified in examining whether it has not been placed on record for the promotion of some special object of the recorder.

We will therefore consider why the account of the purchase of the burial-place has been so carefully preserved.

The transaction is related as one of the most solemn kind. At a public meeting of the children of Heth, the site of the sepulchre is formally trans-

ferred to Abraham for the use of his family. Abraham positively refuses to accept it as a present, but purchases it at its full value, and pays for it with money of the merchant. And the field and the cave are 'made sure unto Abraham.'

Now I think it very probable that this is recorded by Moses to justify the Israelites and the surrounding nations in the belief that the Israelites had a patrimonial right to the land which they were about to invade (at whose southern extremity the burial-place in question is situate). In most instances of conquest by force of arms, the conquerors have thought it necessary to assert a legal right. In English history, William the Conqueror, Henry VII., and William III., anxiously insisted upon their legitimate claims. And it seems easy to imagine that the indisputable possession of a portion of the land, and especially of a burying ground, by the reputed ancestor of the invading tribe, might well be interpreted as giving that tribe a right to possess themselves, not only of the sepulchre, but also of the surrounding territory.

The rite of circumcision, as is well known, has been practised from ages beyond history, not only among the Israelites and the Arab tribes to which they might seem to be most closely related, but also

among the Egyptians and other peoples. It is believed by many, that the motive for it has been sanitary; that a peculiar class of disease (known in the London hospitals), is introduced by the different degree of physical development and by other circumstances, both peculiar to warm countries; and that this rite is preventive against such diseases. And it is remarkable that the earliest contemporary account of it supports this theory. That account is contained in Exodus iv. 24, 25, where 'the LORD sought to kill him [Moses],' that is, he was struck with dangerous illness; and the remedy was, circumcision of his son. If this account is to be taken without alteration, it would imply that the danger to himself made him anxious to preserve his son; but I would prefer to suppose that the original account was, that his son was afflicted with the illness. In either case, I imagine that the strong warning thus received by Moses, was the reason of his earnest enforcement of the rite among the Israelites, and of his record of the sanction of it by traditional divine command to Abraham.

There appears to be no reason for doubting the general accuracy of the tradition in Genesis xxxiv. It only proves, however, that the rite, upon which the narration depends, had been long established and was in use at that time. The usage was certainly

liable to great interruptions, even after the most solemn sanction had been given to it (see Joshua v. 2, &c.), and it is sufficiently probable that the Israelites, while in Egypt, had, in a great measure, or wholly, neglected it; and that the lawgiver had no way of restoring it but by making it a precept of religion, founded upon a sacred tradition.

The reign of myth and tradition may be considered to terminate here. After this we have to deal with history, either closely connected with the facts related, or strictly contemporary.

ON THE TEMPORARY ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ISRAELITES IN EGYPT, AND ON THE EVENTS WHICH FOLLOWED, TO THE VISION OF MOSES IN THE BURNING BUSH ON HOREB.

I SEE no reason for doubting the general accuracy of the account of the introduction of the Israelites into Egyptian territory : that Joseph was sold as a slave into Egypt ; that he rose to become vizier or prime minister of the royal government (perhaps of Lower Egypt only) ; and that he introduced his father, his father's family, and, perhaps, a horde of followers, with large flocks and herds, to the district of Goshen. The locality appears to be sufficiently defined by the considerations that it was fitted for flocks and herds (Genesis xlv. 10), and therefore was not a part of the flooded land of the Delta ; that there is no mention of their crossing any branch of the river, either in going or returning ; that 'every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians' (xlvi. 34), and therefore they were not mixed with the native Egyptians, and were not in Egypt proper ; and that they were 'in the land of Rameses' (xlvii. 11), that is, as I understand it, in an outlying district subject to the provincial government of Rameses or Heli-

opolis, but not in or close to the city. All these indications show that they were in the champaign-country, east of the easternmost branch of the Nile, but far advanced towards the head of the Delta. This locality was well suited to the work which their successors were forced to execute (Exodus i. 11), the construction of the fortifications of Pithom (Patoumos of Herodotus) and Rameses. The Israelites appear to have lived, for some time, in a nearly independent state, still considered as being properly inhabitants of Canaan; the solemn burial of Jacob in the cave of Machpelah was probably done, not only for keeping up reverend family associations, but also for retaining *seisin* of, at least, a portion of that country.

After a time came their oppression, under the Egyptian king, by the infliction upon them of forced labour. It appears, however (as will be seen hereafter), that they were still organised as a nation, and divided into twelve tribes, each of which was represented, when necessary, by a prince; and it does not appear that the Egyptian government attempted to dissolve this organisation. But there seems to have been no sufficient means of uniting the Israelites in a resistance to their oppressors; and the oppression and the degradation went on increasing.

Then arose Moses, the most extraordinary man, the greatest man, recorded in history.

Allusion has already been made to the homicide which he committed in defence of an Israelite, and to his flight into Midian (the first country subsequently entered by the Israelites on their advance towards Canaan, and probably situate on the south-eastern frontier of Canaan towards the Desert). Thence 'he led the flock to the back side of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.' The language here used seems to imply that he had come a considerable distance, and had arrived at the side of the desert opposite to that from which he started ; it appears to agree well with the reputed position of Horeb or Sinai, near the southern point dividing the two heads of the Red Sea. Here (Exodus iii. 2), he saw the 'flame of fire out of the midst of a bush,' and here, it is asserted, he received the command from an angel, or from God, or from the LORD, to proceed, as under the authority of Jehovah himself, the I AM (better rendered in the LXX 'THE BEING,') 'to bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt' (iii. 10), and 'to serve God upon this mountain' (iii. 12), and, ultimately, 'to bring them to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites.' On his anxiously endeavouring to excuse himself from undertaking this charge, on the ground of his inability to speak in a proper manner, he was directed (iv. 14) to use the services of his brother Aaron as

speaker. And finally (iv. 22), he was instructed to adopt a bold tone towards Pharaoh: 'Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my first born; and I say unto thee, let my son go that he may serve me; and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy first born.'

Of the general truth of this history, with some modification in the details, material and mental, I have no doubt. I have no doubt that it was in that place and at that moment, when appearances, not very unlike those described, were presented to the view of Moses; that the mighty inspiration came upon him which convinced him that, great as were the difficulties, he could lead his people to independence and to territorial possessions; but that it must be done by the establishment among them of a new and pure religion, and by showing a bold face towards their oppressors. I am very far from even forming an opinion whether this inspiration was special, in a way exceptional to the ordinary laws of human nature, or whether the recognised laws of mental action will explain it as the effect of a highly excited imagination under extraordinary circumstances. Approaching with all reverence the consideration of this occurrence, which probably has produced a greater effect on the history of the civilised world than any single transaction (one excepted) on record,

I think it right to point out the peculiarities of circumstance, both material and mental, which ought to be taken into consideration in forming a judgment.

It will be seen in a subsequent part of these Notes, that, not many months after this occurrence, the appearances presented to the Israelites were such that (in the minds of persons acquainted with volcanic phenomena), there cannot be a doubt that Sinai was then in a state of volcanic eruption. A few weeks later, when the Israelites were close to Sinai, the mountain was evidently in great volcanic activity. I am justified then in assuming that Sinai was a volcanic region, in which a volcanic eruption was approaching at the time of the visit of Moses. It is almost certain that there would be gaseous exhalations, and it is highly probable that some of these would be inflammable. It is, however, highly improbable that there would be a bush or tree in such a locality. But the appearance of the issuing flame would be sufficient to justify the description given in the history. I have seen the flame issuing from the earth at Pietra Mala in the Apennines, and I can well believe that, with its ramified and unsteady motion, and in the difficulty of approaching near enough for rigorous examination, with a little assistance from the imagination of the observer, it might well be

described as a bush or tree. It is very unlikely that Moses had ever heard of such a thing (the only record in the book of Genesis, of volcanic character, is that of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and this would scarcely guide him to the explanation of a comparatively quiet flame from the mountain side); and in his surprise at the new appearance he would probably describe it as a bush. I conceive, therefore, that the material appearance is fully explained.

As regards the state of his mind, it is evident that he was burning under a sense of the injuries committed by the Egyptians on his nation, and it seems that he had had excellent opportunities of becoming acquainted, not only with the country of Canaan and the traditions connecting it with the Israelite race, but also with the passes from the desert, with the difficult and unaccustomed route from the Red Sea through the desert itself (a route that could not have been known except by his experience with the flock of Jethro), and with two passes over what we call (perhaps incorrectly in that place) the Red Sea. In the solitude of the desert, all these thoughts had undoubtedly been fermenting in his mind, and he might be excited by the sudden view of an extraordinary terrestrial phenomenon to believe, that the feelings branded on his soul were really communications from

the Deity himself in a voice audible to human ears.¹
Upon this I will not venture an opinion.

I have said nothing here of the sign of the rod changed into a serpent. Whatever it was, it was something which the magicians of Pharaoh could do equally well (vii. 11), and it does not appear therefore to deserve attention. Its association with the sign of the leprous hand, whatever that sign might be, destroys the credit of the latter.

I have assumed throughout that Horeb and Sinai are the same mountain, or parts of the same mountain-tract so near together that the same physical reasoning will apply to both.

¹ A curious instance of the effect which mental excitement may produce on the bodily senses is given in Goethe's account of the 'cannon-fever,' experienced by himself, when under the fire of cannon, in which position he had voluntarily placed himself. 'It seems as if you were in some place extremely hot, and at the same time were completely penetrated by the heat of it, so that you feel as if you and this element you are in were perfectly on a par. The eyesight loses nothing of its strength or distinctness; and yet it is as if all things had got a kind of brown-red colour, which makes the situation and the objects still more impressive on you.'—Carlyle's 'French Revolution,' vol. iii. p. 67. A somewhat similar account has been given of the effects of mesmerism.

ON THE INTERVIEWS OF MOSES WITH THE KING OF
EGYPT, AND ON THE PLAGUES OF EGYPT.

MOSES, on returning to Egypt, evidently lost no time in communicating with the principal men among the Israelites, and in obtaining authority from them to proceed, as their deputy, to Pharaoh, and (Exodus v. 1), in the name of Jehovah, to demand permission to go with their families and cattle into the desert. The only reply to this was an increase in the severity of the forced labour ; and the degraded Israelites, cowed by every mark of oppression, murmured against Moses. Moses and Aaron however, apparently alone among the Israelites, retained courage, and determined, vi. 11, (I interpret the commands of Jehovah as the resolutions of Moses), to repeat their demand. No concession was made (vii. 13). On this occasion there is mention of the change of rods into serpents, both by Aaron and by the magicians of Pharaoh. Moses then determined (vii. 15) to force a more public interview ; and the events recorded seem to throw light on the season of the year and on the circumstances in which the meeting took place, and on the import of the interview.

The striking incidents are, that they met Pharaoh when it had been prearranged (vii. 15) that he should be by the side of the river, and that the waters were turned into blood. There are many instances of confusion and repetition in the earlier chapters of Exodus, and I think it possible that there may be a little disorder in these statements.

Modern travellers who have minutely described the rise of the Nile, have stated this :—that the flood begins with a remarkable redness of the water. An eye-witness, in a private communication to me, gives the time at or near the highest flood. I have not observed that the duration of this appearance is recorded, but it evidently lasts for some time, perhaps several weeks. This redness, exaggerated by the language of the narrator, is clearly the ‘turning into blood.’ It shows that the meeting took place some time after the beginning of the Nile rise, or after the summer-solstice, and before the greatest height, or before the early weeks of September.

When the flood has advanced near to its highest state, the banks, which inclose the large reservoirs in which water is to be preserved for the irrigations of the following spring, are cut to allow the water to flow in. This is, and has been from time immemorial, the greatest solemnity of the year. The King, the Caliph, or, in modern times, the Viceroy, is always

present at the cutting of the great dam near Cairo. (See an extract from the 'Times' of September 11, 1873, at the end of this chapter.) It is a festival throughout Lower Egypt. I do not doubt that it was on occasion of this solemnity that Pharaoh was by the side of the river ; and here, in the presence of all the State-officers and all the Nobles of the land, Moses defied him. This was the act of open rebellion ; after this there was no thought among the Israelites of yielding. This transaction probably occurred about the middle of August (supposing the kalendar adapted to the seasons as in Gregorian reckoning).

Then followed a series of events usually known as the 'Ten Plagues.' I shall first cite seven of these, all which are evidently in close connexion :

1. The death of the fish.
2. The appearance and death of frogs in unusual numbers.
3. The appearance of lice or small insects.
4. The appearance of flies, of which there were none in the dry land of Goshen, and which were evidently mosquitoes.
5. A murrain on beasts.
6. Boils and blains on men (pestilence is also threatened).
10. Destruction of the first-born of the Egyptians.

It is evident from No. 2, that the Nile was teeming with vitality, and that there was an enormous amount of putrefaction. I apprehend that in ordinary succession of natural events, the specific circumstances which follow (insects, mosquitoes, diseases of man and beast,) are clear and necessary consequences of the first. Then follows the most terrible, the destruction of the first-born. We have merely to deprive the statement of a little of that apparent precision which is very apt to arise, without adequate foundation, in the narration of striking events, and we see clearly what is meant by this.

The Plague is a regular visitor of Egypt. It comes every year, in the month of November, when the flood is diminished to about half its greatest height, and continues through the winter. It is worst when the flood has been very high, and when there has been rain (Russegger i. 238 and 240). The mortality is then very great. Remarking that pestilence had been threatened, and remarking also the ease with which, among a wonder-loving people, the 'destruction of a great number of persons in a short time' is converted into 'the destruction of the first-born in one night,' I do not doubt that this destruction was the effect of the November Plague. It would not fall upon the Israelites who dwelt on the sound ground.

The remaining 'Plagues' are,

7. The hail.

8. The locusts.

9. The fog.

I can give no illustration of these from modern observations. The formation of the hail implies that the relative temperatures of the aqueous vapour and of the atmosphere were not in their usual state. The hail is described as mingled with fire; that is, with lightning; and those who are accustomed to the daily observation of atmospheric electrometers know very well that hail is always accompanied with a great development of electricity, and frequently with lightning. 'The barley was in the ear . . . the wheat and the rye were not grown up.' In Russegger's table, i. 231, the barley and wheat and other grains are planted (for the first crop) in October and November, and are reaped, the barley in February, and the wheat, &c. in March. It would seem, therefore, that the hailstorm occurred late in January. 'The flax was bolled (LXX, was in seed).' This clearly refers to a winter crop, not mentioned by Russegger.

I conjecture that the great mortality, which led to the departure of the Israelites, occurred in February.

It appears not improbable that Moses, at the

time of his defiance of Pharaoh, was well able to judge from the state of the Nile (then advancing to its full height), that the calamity of a heavy flood was overhanging the country, and that, in the next season, the deliverance of the Israelites might be achieved.

It might almost be imagined that the display of vitality in the Nile was somewhat greater than that in ordinary large floods of the river. Of this I can give no positive explanation; but I will place here the train of ideas which it suggests to me. The great development of life may be plausibly explained by the unusual warmth of the water, a supposition which would also explain the fog, No. 9. Possibly, also, the redness of the water may have been intensified from the same cause, and it may have occasioned the death of the fish, No. 1. Now it is known that the flood of the Nile is derived, almost entirely, from its eastern affluents. We shall see reason for considering Sinai to have been at this time either in volcanic activity, or in preparation for it. It seems possible, therefore, that the volcanic warmth of the ground, operating through a district of great extent, may have affected that eastern side of Africa from which the Nile-floods come. I am far from placing this conjecture on the same footing as others which I have mentioned above.

Note to which reference is made in the preceding chapter.

Extract from the 'Times,' 1873, September 11.

On Tuesday, the 19th August, took place the ceremony generally known as the cutting of the Nile. If we consult the Arabic calendar, printed yearly at Cairo, we find the following notices respecting the river:—January 30. The water of the Nile will be very clear. June 3. The Nile at its lowest. June 10. The water of the Nile is changed. June 17. The descent of the 'Nukha' (or miraculous drop, that poetical fiction of the past, the exact moment of whose fall is calculated by the learned). July 3rd. Announcements are made about the Nile (i.e., by criers who call daily at every house in all the districts of Cairo). July 10. The Nile flows with rapid torrent. Then, generally in the middle of August, comes the 'Yôm wefa-il-Nil'—the day appointed for the cutting of the canal (Musim-el-Khalig), that is, a canal which receives the waters of the Nile in the direction of what is called Old Cairo, south of the great modern city. If any one festival of the Egyptian year has a just claim to outlive the others and to be honoured beyond others, it is this opening of the canal; which ceremony celebrates the season of the irrigation of the Lower Country. 'Egypt is the gift of the Nile.' The custom is a survival from times when the 'bride of the Nile' was a fair and living form. As to the ceremony as it exists to-day, it cannot be said to be one of great interest, as a mere spectacle; but the European who happens to be in the country during 'the Nile,' as this oppressive season is called, according to the threefold division of the Egyptian year, will, of course, be curious to witness all the festivals of the Egyptians, and will not

be absent. Resident Europeans who are present, generally take up their position in a *dahabeah* before dawn, having passed the previous hours in witnessing the fireworks which are provided in profusion on the eve of the festival. All night long the Nile and its banks—opposite the island of Rhoda—present that animated and fantastic appearance to which the epithet ‘fairy-like’ by right belongs. The steamers of the Viceroy, with members of his harem and family, form a glittering fleet of moving lights, and innumerable rockets dart through the clear atmosphere, which is never dimmed by the sombre clouds which so often make night darker in other lands. In the cool night air you can look with pleasure, as you float along, upon the scene that is in motion upon the bosom of the Nile, over which is also borne from the shore the tinkling of the primeval native music, where countless Arabs pass their time in that peaceful and orderly manner which is one of their characteristics, but with the utmost enjoyment of the ‘fantasia’ to which they are so much attached. At an early hour, generally before 6 A.M., the painted barge, above alluded to, has taken up its position, and the ceremony itself takes place as soon as the Khedive, or one of his sons, or, in their absence, the Governor of Cairo, shall have arrived on the spot. A large tent is prepared for their reception on the high banks immediately above the dam, the cutting of which is the event of the day. After the reading of a certain official document the signal is given, and the upper part of the barriers is cleared away. Then the rich waters of the Nile flow, at first slowly, but soon with increasing impetuosity, into its appointed channel. No ardour of Egyptian police can now restrain the impatient Arabs from rushing down the steep incline and plunging into the turbid stream, and no

amount of squibs and well-aimed fireworks, causing great mirth among the crowds, will induce them to emerge; for there still remains the struggle for the bakshish which is duly presented to Father Nile, in the shape of a few silver coins. These are thrown into the water by the greatest personages present. On this occasion the sons of the Khedive arrived just too late to preside at the ceremony.

ON THE NUMBER OF THE ISRAELITES AT THEIR
DEPARTURE FROM EGYPT.

THE number of adult men of the Israelites is stated, in the Hebrew text which has come down to us, as six hundred thousand, a number probably greater than that of modern London and its suburbs; and they were accompanied with very much cattle. Robinson, who never intimates his doubt of a word of the Hebrew Scriptures, has pointed out the difficulty of transporting such a host across the so-called Red Sea; and has expressed his entire inability to imagine how they could be fed in the Sinaitic peninsula, the whole population of which, in the last century, according to Burckhardt, did not exceed four thousand. Bishop Colenso has insisted on the physical impossibility of such a number having been produced from such a parentage as is assigned; and has given numerous reasons of different kinds for rejecting the numerical statement. The following considerations of incidental character, appear to me to have some force:

(1). In Exodus xviii. 13, it appears that Moses undertook, not only the legislative, religious, and

military control of the people, and the direction of the march, selection of stations, and provision of food and water, but also (though with great fatigue) the judgment on the quarrels between man and man. It is needless to point out that no one would undertake this charge with a population like that of London.

(2). When they had approached the southern frontier of Canaan, they were afraid (Numbers xiv. 1) to enter the country, and a large portion of them (xiv. 45) who at length made a movement in that direction were totally routed.

(3). When, after many years of life in the desert (in which they probably gained the courage of Arabs, and certainly acquired a ferocity never equalled except among the early followers of Mahomet), they desired to pass through Edom ; they were unable to force their way (Numbers xx. 21), and were compelled (xxi. 4) to march a great distance back and to take a great circuit, in order 'to compass the land of Edom,' though 'the soul of the people was much discouraged.' Besides giving the evidence of military weakness, the adoption of this route led them into an eastern district, where no large population could possibly subsist.

If I were required to assign a conjectural number for the population, nearly related in symbols to that

of the text, I should, instead of six hundred thousand, adopt six thousand ; that is, one hundredth part. And I believe that this number would satisfy every condition, except those of the abstract numerical statements. The census of the individual tribes in Numbers i., does not admit of centesimal division, but I do not think this important.

The expressions in the legend of Balaam (Numbers xxii. 11, &c.) do not imply much. A tribe of Arabs containing six thousand adult men, with their cattle &c., would necessarily occupy many square miles.

ON THE PASSAGE OF THE RED SEA.

For understanding the nature of this march, it is necessary to have a clear idea of the north-eastern frontier of Egypt. Much light has been thrown on this, first by the French expedition at the end of the last century ; secondly, by the surveys (partly French and partly English) and other operations, connected with the new canal from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea. It is an important result of the late survey, that an enormous error in the levels of the former survey has been detected, and that the very approximate correspondence in level, of the two seas, has been established.¹

Drawing a line from Tineh (Libnah of the Hebrew Scriptures, Pelusium of the Greek and Roman writers) on the Mediterranean, to Suez on the Red Sea ; the line, after passing the large shallow lake of Menzaleh, crosses firm desert ground at a low level, sufficient for the march of armies ; it then intersects the Lake Timsah ; and almost imme-

¹ The reader will find most valuable information in the 'Société d'Études de l'Isthme de Suez. Travaux de la Brigade Française. Rapport de l'Ingénieur. 1847.'

diately passes longitudinally through the 'Bitter Lakes,' which formerly were filled with water (their bottom being about twenty-five feet below the level of the sea), but which for centuries have been without water, still, however, impassable in consequence of the softness of the muddy bottom below their crystal-covered surface.¹ After this, there is firm ground for five or six miles to the head of the Red Sea at Suez.

There are, therefore, only two limited tracts through which an army can pass; that in the neighbourhood of Pelusium, and that in the neighbourhood of Suez. The utility of the last-mentioned pass for such a purpose is qualified by the following circumstances.

Between the Nile and the Red Sea, is the desert of the Mokattam hills, which rise to the height of about one thousand feet. This is 'the desert' spoken of in Exodus as far as xiv. 12. They terminate on the north side, towards the low, flat country which extends from Lower Egypt to the Bitter Lakes, with a nearly semicircular outline; the direct line from Cairo or Memphis to Suez being the diameter of the semicircle. Such a desert would present great difficulties to the march of an army.

¹ The Bitter Lakes are now filled with water, as forming part of the French canal.

But there have always been water-courses and a fertile country round the base of the hills ; and the canal of Necho, which quitted the eastward branch of the Nile at the Patūmos of Herodotus (Pithom and Etham of the Hebrew Scriptures, Thoum of the Roman Itinerary, now Abbaceh), bent round the base of the hills in the Wady Toumilat (a valley included in Goshen), and finally entered the Bitter Lakes. It is therefore practicable for an army to march by a very circuitous route, from Cairo to Suez ; but, having arrived there, they would find before them a desert of vast extent, even worse than that of Mokattam. On the other hand, an army marching by Pelusium, towards Gaza, although they must cross a desert of limited extent, would soon reach the fertile country of Judea.

Every land-march of armies into Egypt or from Egypt, has been made through the pass of Pelusium. The invasion of Egypt by Sennacherib, the march of the king of Egypt to Carchemish, the invasion of Cambyses, that of Alexander, that of Perdiccas, that of Amrou, the movements of Bonaparte, have all been through the pass of Pelusium. No armed force, not even a portion of Amrou's Arabians, has entered by Suez.

But, ever since the establishment of the Moham-medan religion in Egypt, the Haj or annual proces-

sion of pilgrims to Mecca has passed the desert by a nearly straight line from Cairo to Suez, and thence by a nearly straight line to Akabah at the head of the other arm of the Red Sea. The English postal line also crossed the Mokattam desert to Suez in the same line.

The bar of ground which divides the Bitter Lakes from the Gulf of Suez, does not consist of sand, but of firm ground of the eocene formation, through which was cut (by Darius, or one of the Ptolemies, or Trajan) the canal from the Bitter Lakes to the Red Sea. The canal is still, in some parts, nearly perfect; its bed is higher than high water in the Red Sea. The lakes, however, abound in marine shells. A tradition is preserved in Strabo, that the water in them was formerly bitter (that is, sea-water); but in Strabo's time the water was fresh, being furnished from Necho's canal. It is evident, from these statements, that the bar of ground has been raised; and that the Bitter Lakes formerly communicated with the Red Sea. It is possible that the communication was never more than tidal; it is certain that it was so at some time; and the

¹ For discussion of several points which follow, the reader is referred to Mr. Sharpe's paper in Bartlett's 'Forty Days in the Desert,' and to dissertations in the 'Athenæum,' 1849, November 10; 1850, March 16, 23, 30; 1851, June 28, July 5, December 13. The points in question may be accepted as fully established in the sense stated in the text.

explanation of the passage of Moses is made easiest by the supposition that it was tidal at the time of the Exodus.

In the following account, I shall follow principally the statements of the Septuagint, which are more consistent than those of the Hebrew text, on which our version is based. The chief differences are these :

Exodus xiii. 18. 'And God led the people a circuitous way, along the road into the desert to the Red Sea.'

xiv. 2. Instead of Pi-hahiroth the word is *ἐπαυλις*, a word which sometimes means a country house, but in other places appears to mean a hut. But in Numbers xxxiii. 7, the name Pi-hahiroth is translated (correctly, I believe) τὸ στόμα Ἐιρώθ 'the mouth of Eiroth.' I therefore understand Eiroth or Hahiroth to mean, the basin of the Bitter Lakes, and the channel leading from it; and Pi-hahiroth, the mouth at which that channel enters the Red Sea.

xiv. 15. Instead of 'go forward,' the word¹ in the Septuagint is 'let them make a new march.' It

¹ The same word (a tense of ἀναζεύγνυμι) is sometimes used by the Greek historians; and always, I believe, in the sense 'to break up an encampment or an anchorage, with the view of making a new expedition.' In the Septuagint it occurs again in the three last verses of Exodus. It is never used in describing the continuous marches, as, for instance, in Numbers xxx. The etymological meaning of the verb appears to be 'to re-yoke' [horses to a carriage].

will soon be seen how well a change of direction is connected with other parts of the account.

xiv. 20. The 'giving light' is omitted in the Septuagint.

xiv. 21. Instead of 'east wind' the Septuagint has 'south wind.'

I will suppose the reader to have made these alterations in our received text of Exodus; and I will also assume the following identifications of places (the reasons for which are given in works to which I have referred),

Rameses = Heliopolis.

Succoth = Scenæ Veteranorum.

Etham, Pithom, Bouthem, Thoum, = Patūmos, now Abbaceh.

Migdol or Magdolus = the present Ajrut.

Baalzephon = Heroopolis, east of the head of the Gulf of Suez :

and we can now explain, I believe with certainty, nearly all the circumstances of the march.

From an early time (Exodus iii. 12,) Moses had determined to lead the Israelites to Sinai. This determination, however, was certainly not known to the Egyptians, and probably not to a single Israelite. But, with an undisciplined multitude like those whom he conducted, it would have been dangerous to take the direct line of the barren and waterless Haj route.

He, therefore, went in the N.E. by N. direction through a fertile country from Rameses by Succoth to Othom or Etham, undoubtedly collecting stragglers. Thus far his route had been the same as if he had been making for Pelusium, and was probably understood by the Egyptians as directed to that point. But at Etham he suddenly turned to the direction S.E. by E. along the Wady Toumilat, a well-watered line, but leading only to the desert-passage at the head of the Gulf of Suez. Pharaoh conceived the Israelites now to be entrapped, and took measures for pursuing them. It appears to me that he did not follow them on their crooked course, but, with his disciplined troops, crossed the Mokattam by the Haj route. And thus, when the Israelites encamped at Pi-hahiroth, Pharaoh's force presented itself on their western side, leaving them free to attempt the passage to the east (which, if the passage offered any difficulty, would, with an enemy pressing on them, have been excessively dangerous); or to the south (without any object whatever); or to the north by the side of the channel leading to the Bitter Lakes.

It appears to me probable that the passage-ground was then covered by the high tide, and that the Israelites, when surprised, were waiting for the fall of the tide. But, with the enemy pressing close upon them, it was useless to think of passing even at low

water. There remained but one resource, to march upwards almost in a northerly direction by the side of the irregular channel to another practicable place of crossing (undoubtedly well known to Moses), probably just where the Bitter Lake begins to deepen rapidly, five or six miles from their present encampment. At this upper passage they might hope to cross before the enemy could harass them. Accordingly, as soon as the depth of the night concealed their movements, they began their march. Before they reached the second crossing place the tide had fallen sufficiently to leave the Bitter Lake and channel unconnected with the Gulf of Suez, and the strong south wind blew the water to the north end of the lake, and laid bare a good passage close to the deep edge of the lake, and by this the Israelites crossed. The water on each side was a 'wall,' that is, a flank defence. The Egyptians arrived some hours later; the tide had risen again, and was rushing over the bar with great fury into the lake, and those who attempted to pass were swept away.

An incidental circumstance which has attracted the attention of mankind through every age, from the time of the passage to the present time, seems to make this statement of the movements of the Israelites perfectly certain.

So long as the Mokattam hills were between the

Israelites and the Sinaitic Peninsula, nothing remarkable was seen on their march. But as soon as they had made the turn which led them to Pi-hahiroth (I imagine that the order of the incidents in xiii. 21, and xiv. 2, is transposed), they saw in front a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night. This continued until they changed the direction of their march to go from Pi-hahiroth to the passage-place, and then the pillar of fire was behind them. Now on inspection of a map it will be seen that the march, which terminated at Pi-hahiroth, was directed exactly towards Horeb in the centre of the Sinai mountains (one of the highest in the peninsula), and that there were no intervening hills to interrupt the view of Sinai. We have already seen that some months before this time, Horeb had exhibited signs of heat; and six weeks after this time Horeb presented all the appearance of volcanic eruption. It is, therefore, sufficiently probable that, at the time of the Israelite march towards Pi-hahiroth, Horeb was in eruption; and there cannot remain a doubt that the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire were the accompaniments of that eruption. And, therefore, when the direction of march was changed to ascend the channel to the Bitter Lake, the pillar of fire was nearly behind the Israelites, not because the pillar of fire had changed its place, but because their faces were turned in a

direction nearly opposite to that in which they were turned before. The several recorded incidents of the whole account are thus perfectly consistent. And, finally, we are led to the conclusion that the place of passage was not the Red Sea, in our sense of the term, but the southern edge of the Bitter Lake.

Among the maps which serve to illustrate these movements, the large official map accompanying 'L'Isthme de Suez,' and the carefully-drawn map in the 1856 edition of 'Robinson's Biblical Researches,' may be specially mentioned. But the reader must not accept the location of names without consideration. The meaning, in Egyptian, of Rameses, seems undoubtedly to connect it with Heliopolis, instead of the place assigned by Robinson. Succoth or Scenæ (the same word) is usually placed further south than Robinson places it. Heroopolis, which gave its name to the gulf, cannot possibly be in the place marked by Robinson; the translation of the name (considering Baal as meaning 'great men'), as well as the local relations, undoubtedly make it the same as Baalzephon, east of Suez. Etham (which in Numbers xxxiii. 6, is spelt Boutham by the Septuagint), and Pithom, seem to be the same, and to be Patūmos or Abbaceh.

ON THE GEOGRAPHICAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE
MIGRATION FROM THE WESTERN BRANCH OF THE
RED SEA TO THE LAND OF CANAAN.

THE marches to Sinai appear to be perfectly well traced by Robinson and Russegger, especially by the former. The Israelites first went down by the sea-side of the Gulf of Suez, in the desert of Shur; the position of Elim (Wady Ghurundel) appears to be certainly established. They were then thrown off the coast by the mountain Jebel Hummam, and returned to the sea-side in the long narrow desert of Sin. During this march, Sinai was concealed from them by the mountain ranges of Jebel Et Tih, almost close to them. Nevertheless, in Exodus xvi. 10, 'the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud,' that is, they saw either the smoke of Sinai, or the reflection of its fire in the clouds. They then turned E. and E.S.E. through Wady Feiran, in which, probably at the confluence of Wady es Sheikh, is Rephidim. Then they turned through Wady es Sheikh, in directions successively N.E., E., S., and S.S.W., till they entered the small, elevated plain of er Râhah, about 5,000 feet above the sea, which both Robinson and

Russegger have adopted as their place of encampment. Here they had the northern crags of Horeb, 1,200 to 1,500 feet high, immediately in front of them, rising almost perpendicularly from the plain ; and on these, it is not doubted by the travellers cited, was the awful display of fire and cloud recorded in Exodus xix. 16, 18.

The appearances seen and the sounds heard by the Israelites, with very slight allowance for excitement, are so precisely those of a volcano, that I cannot doubt that the mountain was in volcanic eruption. Yet it appears from the geological notes of Russegger that there is no volcanic lava in the neighbourhood. All the rocks, however, are igneous, for the most part granitic and porphyritic. Some are supposed to be genuine plutonic rocks, and some to be metamorphic. These have never been seen as the modern produce of existing active volcanoes (though some of the ancient formations in Somma and Teneriffe resemble them) ; but an analogous instance will show that this negative reasoning has no force. No modern volcanic eruption has been known to produce columnar basalt ; yet the phenomena of the Vivarais in the south-east of France prove, beyond doubt, that an enormous extent of columnar basalt has been produced, long since the valleys received their present forms, from volcanoes whose craters are still perfect,

and whose flow of basaltic lava was accompanied with ejections of stones. On the other hand, the harder mountains of Cumberland are now recognized as formed of volcanic lava or volcanic ash, though no crater can be discovered.

In Exodus xxiv. 10, is a description of the sight seen by the elders who accompanied Moses into the interior parts of the mountain. It would almost seem that they came in sight of a fluid or semi-fluid flow of the igneous rock.

After this, there is frequent mention of the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire on the tabernacle (Exodus xxxiii. 9, xl. 34 ; Numbers ix. 15, &c.). The tabernacle was outside of the camp (Exodus xxxiii. 7), and the Israelites were forbidden to go to it (Numbers xviii. 22). It seems probable that the tabernacle, while they were in Sinai, was on that side of the camp which looked towards the holy mountain ; and, if so, these appearances may have been merely appearances of fire and smoke on the mountain. In Numbers ix. 15, there is much about their journeys having been regulated by the appearance of the pillar ; but in the Septuagint the whole of this is in the future tense, rather as a command than as a history. I conclude that it is not historical, and that there is no evidence of the appearance as having influenced the journeys of the Israelites. But there is a statement of the

cloud having settled upon it in Paran (at Kadesh Barnea). Every consideration of the policy of the movements at that time made it indispensable that the Israelites should stop at Kadesh-Barnea; and it seems likely enough that either contrivance or credulity may explain this recorded appearance. On the appearance of the 'glory of the Lord,' several times recorded, I can offer no conjecture.

From Sinai, the route of the Israelites appears to be traced with certainty by Ain-el-Hudarah (Hazereth), Elath at the head of the Gulf of Akabah, by the desert of Zin to Ain-el-Weibeh (probably Kadesh-Barnea); from which place the reconnaissance by the spies was made. It had undoubtedly been the intention of Moses at once to march in the N.W. direction, and to enter Canaan on the west side of the Dead Sea, by way of Hebron. But the report of the spies filled the people with despair (Numbers xiv. 1), and, though the Israelites came after many years again to Kadesh-Barnea, they did not attempt the S.E. frontier again. Possibly the march through the desert of Paran was difficult; probably the power of the Anakim (including the subdivisions of Jebusites, &c.) was well consolidated. It will be remembered that even Jerusalem was not taken by the Israelites till the time of David. Moses at once gave the order (xiv. 25) 'To morrow turn you, and get you into the

wilderness by the way of the Red Sea'; with the notice that they were to wander in the wilderness forty (probably meaning *many*) years. There is no reason to doubt that, after sustaining one defeat (xiv. 45), they obeyed this order. They had had too severe experience of the western side of the Gulf of Akaba; and I have no doubt that they went (touching at Elath the second time) to the eastern side of the Gulf, or into Arabia proper. That district is very little known to modern travellers.

It would seem to be long after this that (xx. 1) they came again to Kadesh-Barnea; but they did not again attempt the S.E. frontier of Canaan. They begged the Edomites to allow them to march easterly through Edom, apparently in order to gain an easterly line of northern march which would carry them to Moab. The Edomites peremptorily refused it. Then (xx. 23 and xxi. 4) they marched to Mount Hor and 'by the way of the Red Sea' (possibly not to the Red Sea, at any rate not further than Elath) 'to compass the land of Edom,' that is, to pass its southern boundary and gain its eastern side. The first part of this march seems to have been difficult; and here they were afflicted with the Arabian flying serpents. But they gained (apparently) what is now the Haj route from Damascus to Mecca, and no farther difficulties are mentioned. They marched

northwardly, passing (at a considerable distance) east of the Dead Sea; first solicited, and then forced a westerly passage through the dominions of Sihon and Og; and established themselves, for a time, in Moab. Here occurred the temptation by the Midianitish women, and the slaughter of that tribe. After this, they continued their westerly march across the Jordan, and, exterminating a large proportion of the inhabitants, gained possession of the greater part of the country.

The pertinacity of Moses, in following out, through so many difficulties and for such a length of time, the original intention of taking possession of Canaan, is very remarkable. It would seem, that the Israelites visited or approached Elath four times. Once, they were defeated, at Kadesh, by their despair of entering by Hebron, and once again, after many years, by the refusal of the Edomites to let them pass. The critical march, that of compassing Edom, seems to have been effected with great distress to the people.

I will place here a note, on some fundamental points in the geography of the Exodus.

Dr. Beke, in his work entitled '*Origines Biblicæ*,' and again, in a pamphlet, entitled '*A few words with Bishop Colenso*,' has urged that Sinai must have been east of the Gulf of Akabah, and that the Israelite

passage must have been, not of the Gulf of Suez, but of the Gulf of Akabah. Dr. Beke's principal argument is founded on the consideration, that, taking the Midianites, with whom the Israelites were concerned while encamped in Moab, as the same tribe to whom Moses fled from Egypt, it is impossible to reconcile, with the ordinary geographical suppositions, the movement of Moses with the flock of Jethro, and the meeting with Aaron. There are other arguments of lighter weight, but this is the principal one.

I regret much to differ from Dr. Beke in this conclusion, recognising (as must everyone who has given attention to these subjects) the great value of his investigations in reference to the Nile, and to Syria, and, especially, of the correction of geography in regard to 'the country of the two rivers,' and to the place of Harran. But, I cannot accept the result of the speculations relating to the Medianites and Sinai.

Miss Corbaux, in her remarkable papers on the Rephaim (*Journal of Sacred Literature*), without having been called upon to enter into any controversy, has been obliged to consider the place of residence of the Midianites. And she has come to the conclusion (without any assumption, founded on received systems of geography,—see *Journal of Sacred Literature*, January, 1852, page 29), that

there must have been two tribes, or two branches of a people, bearing the name of Midianite, but in widely different localities. There are various reasons for this opinion ; but one which must strike every reader is, the total difference in religious and moral rites.

As to the transfer of the Israelites' place of residence (Goshen), and of their passage of the sea, to a more easterly region; it must be remarked that all their transactions were in close proximity to the river whose waters were red as blood, and to the lands which exhibited phenomena peculiar to vast alluvial tracts. It is totally impossible that a residence of the Israelites between the two gulfs can be brought into harmony with these statements. They must have been close to the Nile-land. All parts of the history, as tried by modern geography, on the received suppositions as to the sites of Goshen and Sinai, hang together with the most perfect consistency.

ON THE POLITICAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE ISRAELITES DURING THEIR MIGRATION FROM THE RED SEA TO THE LAND OF CANAAN.

It was an essential and necessary part of the plan of Moses, that the Israelites should be led through a difficult desert, as the only way of avoiding pursuit; and Moses was, undoubtedly, prepared for the murmurs which met him from time to time. It was the fundamental part of his system, from the time when he received the inspiration on Horeb, that the Israelites should be bound into one nation by the worship of Jehovah, to the absolute exclusion of all other religions; any departure from this was rebellion, far worse than any merely political rebellion. Moses was, undoubtedly, prepared to put it down by strong hand; and I think we cannot dispute the necessity of his doing so. It was also necessary, under the circumstances of the people, that the supremacy of Moses should not be questioned; and Moses was prepared to put down those who would not acknowledge it. (But it is right to remark, that, in the most formidable rebellion directed expressly against Moses, and leading to civil war, with great destruc-

tion of life, Moses appears not to have urged the war at all, but to have done everything in his power to save the rebels from extermination.) Understanding these political necessities of the position of Moses, we may now consider the different internal transactions after leaving Suez.

In a very short time (Exodus xvi. 3), there were murmurs, on account of hardships in the desert of Sin (on the coast of the Gulf of Suez). Then came the manna. This substance has not been identified. Whatever it was, I conceive that it was not food intended for the principal support of life, but something which had the effect of vegetable addition to animal food. The complaint of the Israelites when it first took a definite form (Numbers xi. 5), was, that they had not the vegetable foods of which they had such abundance, and on which, perhaps, many lived exclusively, in Egypt. So it was in the desert of Sin (Numbers xx. 5). They entered the desert from Pi-hahiroth, with abundance of flocks and herds; and, before the cessation of the manna (for which see Joshua v. 12), they had such quantities of cattle, that two of the tribes petitioned (Numbers xxxii), for that very reason, to be excused from crossing Jordan. Food, therefore, was never wanting ; but, perhaps, it was too exclusively animal food. The fire at Taberah (xi. 1), may have

been disease from this cause ; the destruction at Kibroth-hattaaveh (xi. 33), after eating the quails (which have been identified), without restraint, was, undoubtedly, to be attributed to it. In Cæsar's Commentaries, book vii., when difficulty was experienced in the supply of food, the principal suffering of the army arose from the want of bread-corn.

The murmurs for water at Rephidim (Exodus xvii. 1), were quieted by what is called 'smiting' the rock of Horeb, at Massah. From an analogous instance, to be mentioned hereafter, I think it will appear that this was some artificial, or (in modern terms), engineering process, by which water was procured.

Before they reached Sinai, occurred the visit of Jethro, and the appointment of auxiliary judges (xviii. 25). This may serve as a key to much which follows. Moses, when he went from the scene of the burning bush into Egypt, addressed himself to the elders (iv. 29), meaning probably the princes of the tribes, of whom we shall have mention afterwards. But he never addressed them again ; and now, without consulting them, he instituted an organised corps of judges, competent to decide causes of all kinds through all the tribes. Perhaps this may be accepted as the first overt act of assumption

of supreme power, to the deposition of the original princes of the tribes.

In the third month they came to Sinai. The Ten Great Commandments were received, and various important laws passed, but no ritual was arranged. The necessity for a complex ritual seems to have presented itself gradually. Then occurred the scene before mentioned, in which Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of the elders, 'saw the God of Israel;' to which I allude here, as showing that Nadab and Abihu were then quite in the confidence of Moses; and that the number *seventy* of elders, having no relation to the number of tribes, was now introduced.

Moses went again into the mountain for forty days (meaning, probably, for a long time, not precisely defined), and great progress was made in preparing the ritual. On returning, he found that a portion of the people had actually set up an image of the Egyptian Apis; and that his own brother Aaron, his only aid in the beginning of his great enterprise, had been persuaded or compelled to join them. Very melancholy must his discovery have been, as showing how little confidence could be placed, either in the mass of the people, or in his brother. Moses, however, was not wanting to the occasion. He immediately ordered the slaughter of the open wor-

shippers of the image (xxxii. 27), and the destruction of the image. The number of persons killed (stated as 3,000, but, without doubt, enormously exaggerated) was small in comparison with those killed in subsequent disturbances; and the example was effectual. There is no other mention of golden calves, till the days of Jeroboam.

Another visit was made by Moses to the mountain, and a vast system of ritual was prepared. Finally, the tabernacle was set up in the first month of the second year (xl. 17), and, though much of ritual remained to be prescribed, this may be taken as the epoch of the establishment of the New Law.

The next event is that, before they had quitted Sinai, Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, fully in the confidence of Moses, 'offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not.' It was a contemptuous crime of the highest treason against the New Law. 'And there went out fire from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.' That is, I suppose, Moses put them to death immediately. The example was absolutely necessary, but it must have been very painful.

The public execution of the son of Shelomith for blasphemy (Leviticus xxiv. 23) seems to prove, that the religion was well received by the people generally.

The arrangement of the ritual went on; and with

it, the formation of a code of social laws, to which nothing, then existing, was comparable for purity and for clear definition of justice in the infinity of social relations. I imagine that every thing good, in the legislation of modern times, has had its origin in the Sinaitic laws of Moses.

In Numbers vii., however, there is a very curious transaction. For the complete equipment of the tabernacle or travelling temple, to fit it worthily for religious service, expensive vessels were necessary; and these were supplied by the 'offerings' of the twelve princes of the twelve tribes. But all their offerings are precisely the same. The affair has much the air of a forced benevolence, and of a confederacy of the princes, under an annoying pressure which they could not resist, to show their power by the equality of their gifts.

In the course of the second year, the religious and social arrangements were so far complete that they set out in the direct route for Canaan, to the wilderness of Paran (nearly south of the Dead Sea, but at a considerable distance, and not in its deep basin). But affairs began to wear a bad aspect. There had been murmurs and loss of life at Taberah and Kibroth-hattaavah (the nature of the former is not known; that of the latter seems to have been dysentery, or some disease following gluttony); then a

sedition of Aaron and Miriam, and public disgrace of Miriam; then, when the spies had actually made their way into Canaan, and Moses undoubtedly thought the long-sought prize quite within his reach, an alarm of mere cowardice prevented the people from advancing; except a few, who, against orders, made an irregular march, and were thoroughly defeated. In this sudden disappointment of his best hopes, Moses seems to have perceived immediately, that the Israelites were little better than a horde of slaves, totally unfit to enter upon any military enterprise; and that the only way of raising their character was, to inure them, for many years, to the free life of the desert; and he at once ordered a march into Arabia. Great must have been the disappointment and discontent among the people; and, perhaps, the infliction of death (xv. 32) for a small sabbath-breaking did not tend to allay it.

The effect of this disorganization of the mass of the people soon showed itself. The princes, who had undoubtedly submitted with extreme unwillingness to the command of an upstart, rose in a body, and demanded equal power with Moses. 'Two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown,' probably the greater part of the hereditary aristocracy (xvi. 3), 'gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron.'

Moses appointed a meeting with the leaders for the next day, at the door of the tabernacle (that is, in a place entirely under his own power). They came; Moses then warned his own friends to keep at a distance, and assured the rebels that the earth would open and swallow them up; and the earth did immediately open and swallow them up. Then came the 'fire' which consumed the two hundred and fifty princes. And how was this effected? this destruction of enemies who had placed themselves entirely in the power of Moses? I conceive that nothing can be more certain than that they were destroyed by the act of Moses. What kind of pitfall had been prepared for the few, and what other form of death for the many, we cannot precisely say; but the broad character of the fact is, it appears to me, perfectly clear. The immediate witnesses had no doubt of it; for, 'on the morrow all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the Lord.'

Moses desired Aaron 'to go quickly unto the congregation and make an atonement for them, the plague is begun.' And Aaron 'made an atonement for the people, and he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed.' The number of deaths were 14,700 (much exaggerated, it is to be supposed). What was this plague? The word in the Septuagint

is *θραῦσις*; an unusual word, which seems equivalent to the Latin *strages*; and I am told that the Hebrew word has similar force. Among the various senses which such a word might embrace, I have not a moment's hesitation in fixing on 'civil war between the partisans of the new and of the old forms of government.' It was stopped by the exhibition of religious rites; whether upon any understood terms or compromise we are unable to say.

The victory of Moses, however, was complete. The 'nobles' never appear in history again, during his life. The word is found, collectively, I believe, only in xvii. 6 (apparently in political submission), and in xxi. 18 (in no political sense). Although there were occasional murmurs from distress, there was no attack on his government.

Of these murmurs, there is only one that deserves particular notice, namely, that at Meribah. Moses (as he states) was directed to *speak* to the rock, to cause the flow of water (xx.), but, instead of doing this, he *struck* with his rod. The meaning seems to be that, instead of patiently relying on the goodness of God, under circumstances which would have justified waiting, he undertook some mechanical work for obtaining water. Or, possibly, he may have used some forced labour, carried out with cruelty, in the engineering work. The sense of having done wrong in this

solitary instance oppressed him to the end. In the prospect of death (xxvii. 14), this crime alone is mentioned as that for which he was forbidden to enter the land of Canaan.

In the licentious communication with the Midianites (xxv.), there is mention of military execution, and there is also allusion to the plague. The Septuagint word is *πληγή*. Though this is not the same word as that used in the rebellion of Corah and his fellows, yet it appears to mean the same thing; namely, destruction on the scale of that produced by civil war.

There is something very affecting in the circumstance of the aged patriot, after having led his people through so many difficulties, and having himself suffered troubles almost without parallel, but having seen the land and having even defined the boundaries of occupation of the Israelites, dying at length without entering it. (The numeration of his age, composed of three forties, is not to be accepted as exact; for the number forty was, undoubtedly, indefinite.) As a patriot towards his own people, as the introducer of a pure religion, as the author of a legislation pure, merciful, and just, he stands, in my opinion, above all other men. But can we accept as sufficiently justified the slaughter of the Midianites and the command for the extermination of the Canaanites (so ruthlessly carried out by his adopted military successor)? I

hesitate. So far as I can discover, the same excuses might be given for Moses and for Tamerlane and other Mohammedan conquerors, equally sincere in their religion and equally merciless.

The state in which Moses left the Israelites appears to us very singular; yet it is not unlike that of other states of antiquity. There was no single head (Joshua was a mere military commander); further legislation was forbidden (Deut. iv. 2); but a connexion was kept up by the permeation of the Levites through all the tribes, and by the occasional religious meetings in the tabernacle at Shiloh, in Ephraim, nearly in the geographical centre of the country. (The Greek states of Hellas proper, with their Delphic worship and their public games, and the Ionic states with their religious meetings for the Panionia, were in nearly the same condition.) And, on the whole, they seem to have gone on very well. In spite of the occasional oppression of a single tribe by the bordering nations, they appear to have increased in strength and wealth, and to have possessed the fundamental elements of power in greater abundance in the time of Samuel, than in that of Joshua.

ON THE CHARACTERS OF THE PRIESTS AND THE
PROPHETS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

IN the imperfect history between Joshua and Eli, there is scarcely an allusion to the Tabernacle at Shiloh, or to the succession of High Priests. Still, there seems to be no doubt, that the institutions of the Tabernacle were fully maintained, and that the Priests followed in orderly succession. But, from the time of Eli, there is abundant mention of Priests ; and, at the same time, mention begins of persons called by the title of 'Prophet,' 'Seer,' 'Man of God.' Many readers of the Hebrew Scriptures, undoubtedly, consider these as of the same class as the Priests ; they were, however, totally different.

The Priests seem to have been a corporate body, the High Priesthood probably hereditary ; of the appointment of other priests we have no information, except the complaints (1 Kings xii. 31 ; xiii. 33), of irregular appointment by the kings ; endowed, attached to the temple, supporting its interests and those of their own order, and sometimes acting with the boldness and fierceness of warriors. Eli, Urijah,

Hilkiah, seem to have been religious priests ; but Samuel set up a king, then set up a rebel, and raised a religious war for the extermination of the Amalekites ; Abimelech, Zadok, Abiathar, supported David ; Jehoida, one of the boldest, fortified the temple, murdered the queen, set up an infant prince under himself, and was afterwards tried for embezzlement ; Zechariah was executed for rebellion ; Azariah, with four score priests 'that were valiant men' expelled from the temple Uzziah, one of the ablest of the kings of Judah, and deposed and imprisoned him (by declaring him a leper). Jeremiah, though strong in his political feeling in favour of the Assyrian alliance, appears to have been an amiable man ; and (more especially if he was the author of Deuteronomy), a highly educated and accomplished writer.

The prophets were persons who appeared from time to time, usually emerging from the lower classes, under a supposed inspiration from the Deity. They do not appear to have demanded anything for their personal wants or luxuries (though enormous gifts were sometimes made to them) ; they were certainly not incorporated in any way, though there probably were some schools or institutions, in which, occasionally, they had communion. Their power was sometimes very great, founded entirely upon their connection with the very lowest classes, but sufficient to

enable them to beard even the most powerful kings; their influence was usually exerted in the most honourable of all attempts,—that of protecting the lower classes against the upper classes, or the king; sometimes, however, in the more mischievous way (perhaps, with the same object), of raising rebellions by direct encouragement to the leaders; and, sometimes, in interferences in domestic and foreign policy, in which, however, a rude notion of patriotism may be discovered; or in contests with each other. Their habits, frequently, were those of frantic persons, dancing madly like the modern Dervishes, running about naked, or living in exposed situations, like Simon Stylites, or the fictitious Theodoric of Engeddi.

Among the prophets who exhibited ability, with earnestness and moderation, the most conspicuous are Nathan and Gad (to be mentioned hereafter), and Isaiah.

Among those who interfered politically, even to the extent of encouraging rebels, but without greater crime, are Ahijah, who set up Jeroboam as a rebel against the oppressive government of Solomon, and afterwards reproached Jeroboam's change of religion; and Shemaiah, who stopped the war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam.

Of those who, with great ability, displayed un-

limited ferocity, are Elijah, who slaughtered without mercy the party opposed to him; Elisha, who instigated Hazael (vizier) to murder Benhadad (king) of Syria, and who set up Jehu apparently for the express purpose of committing wholesale slaughters, in which he was aided by the savage Jehonadab. The legendary history of Elijah and Elisha may be compared with that of Dunstan.

There is one class, however, who can only be described by the term silly. Such are the two prophets in 1 Kings xiii.; those in 1 Kings xx.; Micaiah and Zedekiah, who opposed each other in the scene before Ahab and Jehoshaphat; the man of God, 2 Chronicles xxv. 7, that compelled Amaziah to dismiss a large army of mercenaries, by whom, in consequence, a considerable part of Judah was ravaged.

There are many other individuals mentioned; but the consideration of the peculiarities of the classes above described, is sufficient to shew us that the mere title of 'man of God' does not give to the bearer of it any claim to the slightest respect.

ON THE 'ENQUIRING OF GOD.

AFTER the death of Joshua, there occur frequent notices of 'enquiring of God.' In the greater number of instances, there is no clue to the form of the inquiry ; but, in a few, there are sufficient hints to enable us to understand what it was.

It appears that it was not an inquiry of the High Priest, or any person who might be considered as communicating, on the part of the nation, with the Deity ; it seems to have been a consulting of any Priest, or Seer. Thus, Judges xviii. 5, five Danites desired a Levite to ask counsel of God ; 1 Samuel ix. 8, the servants of Kish ask where 'the seer' is. It was accompanied by a payment of a fee ; in 1 Samuel, ix. 8, the fee was a quarter of a shekel of silver (about eightpence) ; in 1 Kings, xiv. 3, it was ten loaves, and cracknels, and a cruse of honey. Sometimes, it applied to small matters ; as the inquiry of the five Danites whether their way would be prosperous, that of the servants of Kish about finding his asses. Sometimes, it was upon contingences ; as 1 Samuel xxiii. 11, where David inquires whether, if he stay at Keilah, Saul will come against the

town ? and whether the inhabitants will give him (David) up ? and, on receiving unfavourable answers, David decamps. Sometimes advice is given on matters of detail ; as 2 Samuel v. 22, where David is directed to fetch a compass behind the enemy and come upon them over against the mulberry trees. Sometimes, when the inquiry and the answer are perfectly simple, the event sadly deceives expectations, as in two instances in Judges xx.

The whole system argues a very low state, intellectual and religious, of the Israelites.

The only man who appears to have had the sense and spirit to endeavour to put it down, was Saul (1 Samuel xxviii. 3) ; and it is not improbable that this conduct, which would deprive the priests of some of their emoluments, contributed to excite the hostility of the priestly party. And even Saul, when pressed with insurmountable difficulties, was fain to endeavour to strengthen his own mind by appeal to a wise woman (1 Samuel xxviii. 8).

ON SOME POINTS IN THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE
JEW, FROM THE RISE OF SAMUEL TO THE DEATH
OF DAVID.

ON failure of the direct line of High-Priests in hereditary descent from Aaron (by the death of Eli and his two sons Hophni and Phinehas), Samuel seems to have been appointed High-Priest, or, at least, to have acted in that character ; and he appears to have conducted himself with great ability even as a military leader. As he grew old, and delegated part of his power to his sons, the people became discontented, and openly demanded the appointment of a king. This is the first appearance of the division of the nation into two grand parties (which had probably existed before this time, but which now appeared openly, and whose continued dissensions form the subject of nearly all the internal history of the Israelites to the Captivity) ; one party supporting the government of the old hierarchy, or, at least, its predominance, the other party supporting the kingly government. Samuel yielded to the demands of the people very unwillingly, and appointed Saul king, apparently (1 Samuel x. 25) prescribing the rules of government. A victory over

some formidable enemies settled Saul quietly on the throne.

I attach no importance to the drawing of lots (1 Samuel x. 20); it was evidently a contrivance of Samuel, as he had already chosen Saul (x. 1). The story of the thunder storm (xii. 18) only shews that Samuel accurately understood the signs of the weather.

Samuel seems now to have expected that the new king would be merely a tool in his own hands. The promptitude of Saul, however, on an occasion of national difficulty, when Samuel had failed to his appointment (xiii. 8), convinced him that Saul intended to be king in reality; and Samuel immediately quarrelled openly, and threatened to dethrone him (xiii. 14). Saul, however, conducted himself with great vigour, and seems, in a short time, to have made the Israelites more formidable than they had been since the days of Joshua (xiv. 47).

The next special incident is the war with the Amalekites. It would seem (xiv. 48) that the Amalekites had plundered or kidnapped the Israelites, and were to be punished; but the extent of the punishment became a point of deadly quarrel between the priestly and the kingly parties. Samuel, grounding his demand upon a tradition many generations previous to this (xv. 2), actually made the

horrible demand that everything living of Amalek should be destroyed (xv. 3, 18). Saul carried the main point, but yielded in some degree (xv. 33). The priest and the king had now quarrelled so irreconcilably, that on Samuel entering a town (xvi. 4) the inhabitants, evidently good subjects of Saul, took it for granted that Samuel came with hostile intentions.

Samuel now proceeded to put in execution his threat of dethroning Saul, by raising a rival who was to be supported by the whole influence of Samuel and the priests generally. The person chosen was David. The anointing in xvi. 13, does not appear, on the face of it, to have been more than claiming David as a friend to the priestly establishment; but, taken in conjunction with xiii. 14, and xv. 28, there can be no doubt that it meant consecrating him as king. The whole course of Samuel's conduct appears most reprehensible.

With regard to the introduction of David at Saul's court there is a little confusion, the verse xvii. 58, being irreconcilable with xvi. 22. It is sufficient, however, to know that David was in Saul's confidence (xvi. 22), that he had important public trusts (xviii. 5), and that he had been selected as confidential agent by Samuel. The acclamations of the people in favour of David excited the jealousy of

Saul (xviii. 8), till he, at last, attempted David's life, and David immediately took refuge with Samuel (xix. 18). David had now distinctly taken his part, and was regarded by Saul as indubitably a rebel or competitor for the throne (xx. 30). The priests of Nob gave him assistance (xxi. 1), and were executed as abettors of rebels (xxii. 18). The bitterness of the two parties must have been increased by this occurrence.

After this, David seems to have roamed about as a powerful robber, followed by ruffians of every kind (xxii. 2), generally pursued by Saul, sometimes surprising him and showing generosity in his conduct. The course of the history shews that the priestly party was far the weaker of the two.

The raising of the spirit of Samuel appears to have been a mere piece of trickery, requiring no further notice, as unimportant in the history.

At last came the calamitous defeat on Mount Gilboa, and the death of Saul and Jonathan. In the confusion which followed, the unimportant tribe of Judah (which in later times was always attached to the priests), elected David king; the Benjamites and the northern tribes elected Ishbosheth, a remaining son of Saul. Disagreements (2 Samuel ii. 15) and war (iii. 1) arose; Ishbosheth at last was murdered;

and not till then did the northern tribes reluctantly acknowledge David.

Thus, it appears, that David, when he ascended the throne, must have been viewed in the following lights :—

As an upstart and a rebel, who ultimately rose by the death of his master, and the murder of his master's son :

As the leader of the priestly party, which the experience of several past years had shown to be the weaker, but to which he had shown his intention of adhering to the utmost :

As the chosen man of the southern states in opposition to the northern.

Against these disadvantages he was supported only by his personal abilities and personal popularity ; and on any failure of the kindly feelings which these might create, he was constantly liable to the disturbances which the other permanent causes might produce.

In a short time, David gave a strong indication of his intention still to sustain the priestly party, by sending for the ark (vi. 2). And, apparently, soon after this (vii. 2, and Psalm cxxxii) he wished to build a permanent temple. Nathan, after a night's consideration, dissuaded him from it. I conceive that, in this instance, Nathan acted as a faithful

guardian of the people against the king. I imagine that he saved the people from the imposition of a tax, which might have produced the most mournful consequences, like those which followed near the close of David's reign.

It would seem, that it was under a clear perception of the hostility, which he might expect from the party which had been personally attached to Saul, that David took an early opportunity (2 Samuel ix.) of seeking out Mephibosheth, one of Saul's descendants, and offering kindness to him. It seems doubtful whether this produced the intended effect.

The disgraceful affair of Bathsheba and the atrocious murder of Uriah (in which the conduct of Nathan was most admirable), must have lowered David very much in the estimation of the people.

In the horrible quarrel between Amnon and Absalom, it seems probable that, in the opinion of the people, David had been remiss in judgment of Amnon, and that Absalom was in the right. And it would seem that (xv. 3) David neglected the administration of justice, and Absalom professed to take it up. A head, therefore, was not wanting to a rebellion.

In the contest which followed, the rebels, apparently, had the numerical majority. The characters

of the parties may be judged from the following remarks :—

It seems doubtful whether Mephibosheth was not concerned (xvi. 3, and xix. 26).

The rebels openly reproached David with his hostility to Saul (xvi. 5).

The priests supported David with all their influence (xv. 24, xviii. 19, &c.).

David was supported mainly by the people of Judah, and the rebels were supported mainly by the northern tribes (xvi. 3, xviii. 7, xix. 11, xix. 41, &c.).

After the death of Absalom, the rebellion seems to have died away quietly. But the grounds of discontent were, probably, as strong as ever. The enmity of the anti-priest party was not diminished; and the quarrel between the northerners and the southerners was probably rendered more bitter (after another reign had passed, it separated them into two kingdoms which were never again united).

To secure himself on the throne, David had recourse to a horrible expedient. He felt that while there lived a descendant of Saul, able to support the government, he himself might always be attacked by rebellions of the party, which still affectionately cherished the memory of Saul. Mephibosheth was physically unfit to reign, and was kept a prisoner in David's house. But there were living seven descen-

dants of Saul, totally unconcerned, as far as information goes, in the late rebellion. These could not be suffered to live longer. Under pretence of a divine command, to satisfy the vengeance of the Gibeonites against Saul, these seven men were seized and impaled, or crucified (such appears to be the meaning of the word). In regard to the extent of slaughter or desolation, there is no want of instances infinitely exceeding this; but all history does not present another act so atrocious in its cold-blooded hypocrisy as this. David now felt himself more secure; the race, of which he had been the rival, was extinct; he even allowed the rebel Shimei to live (whose execution, however, was the first act of David's successor), and he seems to have reigned with great vigour, especially in the conduct of foreign wars.

It was but a few years (four or five) after this, that David, in defiance of the judgment of his best advisers, and especially of Joab (who appears to have been a very able man, troubled with no sort of scruples), determined to 'number' the people.

What could this 'numbering' mean?

The explanation will be found in Exodus xxx. 12. On occasions of 'numbering' the people, every person was to pay a half-shekel. (Probably, in the more settled and richer condition of the Israelites,

the sum was increased). The 'numbering' then was the *levy of a poll-tax*. This is the most distressing of all imposts ; it is likely, almost always, to lead to tumult ; and when levied upon people, whose feelings have already been irritated, it is sure to do so. It was thus that the rebellion of Wat Tyler was raised in England. In the instance of David's levy, it seems to have been enforced by armed men (2 Samuel xxiv. 4). It cannot, I think, be doubted that what occurred among the Israelites was tumult, riot, confused rebellion. The choice apparently offered by Gad (xxiv. 13) was not a real choice (which Gad could not offer), but only an indication of the different classes of evil likely to happen : 1st, so much distress as to interrupt the tillage of the ground ; 2nd, an indignation so universal as to cause the expulsion of David ; 3rd, a 'pestilence' or civil war. (The Septuagint word is the same, *θραῦσις*, which we have had before.) The last was that which happened ; and 70,000 persons (it is stated) died in it. But it is remarked that it did not reach Jerusalem. The reason seems to be (xxiv. 8), that the tax-gatherers had not reached Jerusalem, which was to be taxed last. When the dissension approached Jerusalem, David perceived that it was too serious for him to encounter any longer, and that by some concession it must be stopped. The short account given of the

transaction on the threshing-floor of Araunah, the Jebusite, enables us to conjecture at least what the concession was. David insisted on purchasing the threshing-floor and the oxen for sacrifice, at their full price; and there, an altar was built and a solemn sacrifice was performed. I imagine that this was accepted, by the people, as an engagement sanctioned by the most revered rites of religion, to the effect that no ground should be taken, and no impost should be levied by the king, except in strict conformity with the laws.

As to the purpose for which the threshing-floor was required, and for which, probably, the whole of the money was collected, we are enabled by an incidental remark in 2 Chronicles iii. 1, to offer an explanation that may be considered certain. The threshing-floor was the place on which the Temple was built a few years later. It was, therefore, to carry out the scheme cherished through so many years, of building a temple, that this ill-judged attempt of raising money was made.

In 1 Chronicles, xxii., xxviii., xxix, David is represented as giving a public statement of the large amount of money which he had collected for the purpose of building a temple.

ON THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE AND THE
GENERAL POLICY OF SOLOMON'S REIGN.

THERE is reason for believing that David, with all his faults (some of them atrocious), was a religious man ; and his anxiety for the erection of a temple may have been purely religious ; or it may have had some mixture, especially towards the latter part of his reign, of the motives which I shall mention shortly. But I see no reason for thinking that Solomon was religious ; his character appears to me to resemble that of the late Mehemet Ali, of Egypt, more closely than any other that I know ; and I consider his determination to build the temple as an act of policy, well suited in its general design to the circumstances of the kingdom, and harmonising completely with the rest of his conduct.

In the latter part of David's reign, the Jewish monarchy was very powerful. The northern and southern tribes were reasonably well united ; the Philistines on the coast of the Mediterranean had been repeatedly humbled ; the Ammonites and Moabites, east of Judea, had been completely reduced ; garrisons were fixed in Edom, south-east of

Judea, and the Edomites were tributaries ; the same was done in the large city and important territory of Damascus ; David's kingdom included Hamath, farther north on the Orontes, and Zobah or Nisibis, beyond the Euphrates ; and the whole of the desert between Judea and the Euphrates was undisputedly subject to him. It is also expressly mentioned that the kingdom extended to the frontiers of Egypt, and that it included the eastern gulf of the Red Sea.

The possession of this territory gave the entire control of the immense commerce with India ; which, before the circumnavigation of Africa, passed, in a great measure, by caravans, across the Syrian desert. The commerce from the south of India to Egypt went, probably, to some port in the Red Sea, and the goods were then carried overland to the Nile ; but that from the south of India to the Mediterranean went by sea, up the Persian Gulf, then up the Euphrates, and then across the Syrian desert to the east coast of the Mediterranean ; that from the north of India passed through Cabul by Balk, along the south shore of the Caspian, and then to the east coast of the Mediterranean.

To draw this lucrative commerce through the dominions then subject to Solomon, it was necessary to establish posts in the desert. The foundation of

Tadmor (subsequently called for a time Palmyra), is expressly ascribed to Solomon ; it is probable that there existed some sort of town, it being a fertile spot in the middle of the desert ; but Solomon made it a defensible fortress. The building of Balbec also is, in the East, given by tradition to Solomon. Tadmor and Balbec are well situated as intermediate posts between the Euphrates and Tyre ; Balbec being at the head of the stream which enters the Mediterranean near Tyre. Possibly Balbec was the post between Tadmor and Sidon ; Damascus, that between Tadmor and Tyre. Tyre was a colony from Sidon, but soon became more important than Sidon. In the Books of Kings, the inhabitants of Tyre are called Sidonians ; from this, it is probable that Tyre was young in the time of Solomon. Combining these things, and remarking also the friendly relations between Solomon and the king of Tyre, it appears not improbable that the great stream of commerce, through Tyre, was first distinctly turned that way by Solomon. The importance to which it rose in a few reigns, may be inferred from the lamentations of the prophets on the destruction of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar. The Jewish kingdom was a gainer by this commerce, because Tadmor and Balbec were within the Jewish dominions.

But it was matter of great importance to carry

a current of commerce through the very centre of the Jewish kingdom. Supposing now, that there was easy traffic from the East by the Euphrates and Tadmor to Damascus, it does not appear difficult to carry as much of this, as might be needed, down the great valley of Judea, to Egypt. And, as far as I can judge, this might be the easiest way, even from the south coast of India, to Egypt. The navigation from India to Babelmandel was long for the ships of antiquity; the navigation of the Red Sea, difficult. The navigation to the Persian Gulf was inconsiderable, and all the rest was sufficiently plain. Arrived at Damascus, the easiest way might appear to be by sea from Tyre; but there are no reasonably good ports in Egypt, for Alexandria is not included in ancient Egypt, and its value as a port seems to have been not known in those ages. There appeared to be, therefore, a good prospect of bringing the whole of the Indian trade to Egypt, through Judea; and I have little doubt that this was done.

In the East, in distant ages, the connection between commerce and temples appears to have been very close. The temples appear to have been places of exchange, and places of deposit of treasure. Sometimes, there occurs mention of attempts by the Seleucidæ and other powerful kings to plunder temples; two perished in such attempts. In accordance, then, with the customs of antiquity, the

building of a temple, in the line of a new course of commerce, was indispensable for the complete establishment of the commerce.

Such, I imagine, may have been the moving cause which led to the erection of Solomon's temple.

It was probably with the same view, that temples or high places were consecrated to other gods in the immediate neighbourhood of Jerusalem.

From the mention of the navies which Solomon and Jehoshaphat endeavoured to establish, it is evident that there were other branches of commerce which they wished to encourage, leading probably through Jerusalem. There was a navigation by way of Ezion-geber (near Elath), on the Red Sea, to Ophir, possibly some part of South Africa ; and there was a navy of Tarshish ; which may mean in its primary sense, a fleet on the Mediterranean ; but which may have traded in some way to the Gold Coast and Ivory Coast, perhaps by caravan trade from Carthage, in concert with the Tyrians. Each of these navigations brought valuable articles. Those from the Red Sea were probably carried to Jerusalem, on their way to Tyre, for exportation to the Mediterranean. Those from the navy of Tarshish were probably landed at Tyre and brought through Jerusalem, in part for Egypt.

There was also a trade of spices or frankincense, from Arabia.

ON THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE TWO DIVISIONS OF
THE ISRAELITE NATION, AFTER THE REIGN OF
SOLOMON.

WHEN Jeroboam, in the reign of Solomon, attracted attention as a rebel, he fled to Egypt. On the revolt of the northern tribes, he returned, became the king of those tribes, and immediately set up the golden calves. It is difficult now to ascertain, whether there had been lingering among the ruder Israelites any remains of the Egyptian worship, as there had been in the encampment in front of Horeb; or whether the establishment of the Egyptian religion was one condition of the assistance given by the Egyptians to Jeroboam. This, however, appears certain, that the Egyptian religion maintained its footing (though not unaccompanied by Asiatic religions) among the northern tribes, through many reigns; and that the relations between Egypt and the northern tribes were always friendly, while those between Egypt and Judah were frequently hostile.

When, after a time, the Assyrians began to interfere in the affairs of Palestine, they were usually

hostile to the northern tribes, and were friendly to Judah, till after the total destruction of the northern kingdom. And, through this period, there is no appearance of the introduction of the Egyptian religion into Judah. The strange religions which were introduced were entirely those of Asia; the worship of Baalim, Moloch, and Ashtarosh.

REMARKS ON BISHOP COLENSO'S EXAMINATION OF
THE PENTATEUCH.

THE greater part of the preceding Notes was written long before the publication of Bishop Colenso's Examination was begun, and the whole was finished before the Bishop's fifth volume was issued. It may seem proper now to compare, in some measure, the views entertained by the Bishop and by myself, and to state whether my own have been modified by the Bishop's very remarkable work.

Before entering on this, I must say that it is hardly possible to overrate the value of Bishop Colenso's Examination, to all who take interest in archaic biblical criticism, but especially to those not acquainted with the Hebrew language. The Bishop's extensive erudition in literature, both ancient and modern, is placed at the reader's command ; the different Hebrew words and phrases, employed in different parts of the Pentateuch, to express the same general sense, are so distinctly translated and so phonetically represented as to raise the mere English reader to a level with the Hebrew scholar ; and the Bishop's own conclusions, as well as those of the

principal modern scholars, are so clearly stated as to leave no doubt on the points placed before the reader.

It is, however, a necessary consequence of the peculiar character of the literature connected with this inquiry, that, even though the novel introductory considerations be accepted as proved to mathematical demonstration, the novel inferences from them rest only on moral judgment. Great uncertainty or even positive disbelief, in reference to the Bishop's final conclusions, may still exist. I propose to state here how far I do, myself, decline to accept Bishop Colenso's conclusions.

The Bishop's main points may be considered to be these :

That the text of the Pentateuch was not treated formerly with that degree of respect which we now consider to be due to it, and does not now possess the character of an authentic history.

That the Pentateuch was written very much later than, in late years, has usually been believed.

And in pursuing these ideas the following special points are argued :—

I. That the book, Deuteronomy, was certainly written at a late time ; that it was, probably, written by Jeremiah ; and that it, probably, was the book discovered in the Temple in the reign of Josiah, under the high-priesthood of Hilkiah.

II. That the number assigned to the population of the Israelites, in the book of Exodus, is extravagantly and absurdly great; but that it is so artificially formed as to make it impossible for us to explain it or correct it by any simple supposition; and that, generally, it throws great doubt on the value of the whole book as a professed contemporary, or nearly contemporary, account.

III. That the book of Genesis, and the book of Exodus, at least as far as the sixth chapter (where the Analysis terminates), are most distinctly written in the main by two writers, whose accounts are frequently inconsistent; smaller parts being also probably written by one or two additional writers and by the Deuteronomist.

IV. That the traceable steps of the introduction of the name 'Jehovah,' in the Psalms of David, and in the formation of proper names of persons, make it probable that that name was introduced to the Israelites about the time of Samuel, and not before the departure from Egypt as stated in Exodus vi.

V. That the books of the Tetrateuch contain Songs, Prophecies, Allusions of various kinds, which increase the probability that they were written at a late time.

VI. In conclusion, that these books, founded (as to the history of the Israelites) upon very indistinct

traditions of oppression in Egypt and laborious march through the Desert, were in reality written by or under the direction of Samuel, and of his immediate successors in the same college, Nathan and Gad: the Elohist writer of the older and graver portions being Samuel, and the writers of the other portions (frequently discordant with the first) being Nathan and Gad. There were also some interpolations by the Deuteronomistic and, perhaps, other writers.

To these points I will advert in succession.

I. I accept entirely Bishop Colenso's theory on the date and authorship of Deuteronomy. I think it is proved with certainty that it was written about the time of Josiah; and I think it in the highest degree probable that its author was Jeremiah, and that it was produced as discovered in the Temple under the priesthood of Hilki'ah. It is necessary to establish this point in the first instance, because, after this admission, any reasoning referring to the Tetrateuch, founded on passages in Deuteronomy, is *ipso facto* worthless.

II. I have long held the opinion, and I imagine every person who has carefully considered the subject has held the opinion, that the number assigned to the Israelites is vastly too great, say a hundred times too great. The reasons (additional to those in my own mind) adduced by Bishop Colenso, founded on con-

siderations of the family descents and of the provisions for religious ritual, appear to establish this irrefragably. If all the tribe-numbers had ended with two ciphers, I should have struck off the ciphers without scruple ; but they do not so end. I recognize, with the Bishop, that the existing inadmissible numbers have been put in, not by accident, but by design ; and that, therefore, there must remain a suspicion vitiating the trustworthiness of the character of the whole account which accompanies them. But is it necessarily more than suspicion ? In English history it would be almost certainty ; in Oriental history it is probably nothing. It is always understood that the tendency of Orientals to numerical exaggeration is so strong and so incurable, that no inference, good or bad, can be drawn from their numbers—(In a preceding section I have adverted to the story of 27,000 men being killed by the falling of a wall). I do not, therefore, on account of these large numbers, withdraw my entire confidence in the general history of the Exodus ; although I admit that it is impossible that Moses or his trusted servants can have given the musters as they stand at present.

The following arguments have no force, for a reason already mentioned. Colenso, part I. page 35, Moses and Joshua addressing all Israel ; but the passage is in Deuteronomy. And part I. p. 139, &c.



the impossibility of crowding certain events into the time included between two marked acts ; but the latter act exists in Deuteronomy only. While thus stating my total dissent from the temporal impossibility of the Midian massacre, I agree entirely with the Bishop on the points, that the numbers concerned are impossible, and that the conduct described is most atrocious.

The question about the individuals of the family of Judah, part I. pp. 17 to 30, I think not worth discussing.

III. The distinction between the two classes of writing which Colenso ascribes respectively to the two principal Elohist and Jehovist writers E and J,—which distinction is not inferred from the difference of names by which they designate The Deity, although closely accompanied by it,—is admirably and completely worked out by the Bishop. The distinctive signs of his authors, E₂ and J₂, are not so clearly seen by the mere English reader ; but these, as well as those of D, may be accepted on the Bishop's indication. With respect to all these, I have found by experience, that it is an excellent plan to mark (in a common Bible) the passages pointed out by Bishop Colenso, by distinguishing marks in the margin or across the text. (I have used a single black line for E, a double black line for E₂, a single red line for J, a double red

line for J₂, and a serpentine red line for D). The passages thus discriminated are at once seen to exhibit different kinds of history and different trains of thought, expressed in language of different characters. (To some of the specific differences, I shall advert presently.) It is also seen that the writings of E present something like a continuous history; those of J, a history less distinctly continuous, and sometimes discordant with E.

But the writings are strangely intermingled. Not only different portions of a chapter, but different portions of a verse, are ascribed to different writers. In one instance (Genesis xlvii., verse 11, not a long verse), the verse is divided into four parts.

IV. The facts, that the earlier Psalms of David scarcely contain the name Jehovah, while the later Psalms contain it very frequently, and almost exclusively (a fact established by a most careful and elaborate examination of the Psalms); and that in the times before Samuel, the proper names of persons are usually compounded with El, while after that time they are usually compounded with Jah; appear to me to be placed beyond doubt. But I am very far from founding upon these facts the inferences which Bishop Colenso bases on them. In the experience of modern times we have learned to know that there are such things as religious revivals. There

were such, perhaps, in the later ages of our Anglo-Saxon dynasty ; there were certainly such in the Puritan epoch following the Reformation ; nearly contemporaneous with this there was one in the Roman Catholic countries ; and not far removed from our recollections was that of the Wesleyan preachings. And these successive revivals have been accompanied with changes in the character of the names given to children. The old names Geoffry, Pierce, Joscelind, &c., have almost disappeared from us ; and in their place we have very few names except scriptural names, and names adopted in compliment to our kings. Among the Puritans and Methodists the names were almost exclusively scriptural. In Germany arose such names as Gottlieb, Gottfried, &c. In France there came into use such names as Jean Baptiste, &c. ; and names of scriptural or more modern saints were introduced into Spain and other countries. And thus, in the changes of names occurring about the time of Samuel and David, and in the change of the Highest Name gradually adopted by David, I see nothing more than a necessary consequence of the religious revival and the increased attention to religious literature which certainly took place about that time.

Unequivocally I express my opinion that they do not, in the smallest degree, justify the theory that the

name Jehovah was then first introduced among the Israelites.

It seems probable that the time of Enoch was one of a religious revival; it appears to me certain that the time of Moses was one; though in the latter case, (as usually happens), religious and political motives were combined.

(V.) Undoubtedly, there are interpolations of late date, some large and some small, in the Tetrateuch. Of these the most remarkable is the story of Balak and Balaam; which, whatever foundation it may have had in ancient legends, is, in its present shape, unquestionably a composition of the time of David, and intended to flatter David. If it be omitted entirely, the history is left in a continuous form. In the song of Deborah I see nothing to decide its date, or at least to fix it to a late time; it is, however, unimportant. The prophecies as to the fate of the several tribes are probably late.

Bishop Colenso is, undoubtedly, well supported in his remark, that the books of the Tetrateuch were not regarded by the writers of the age from Samuel to Solomon with the same respect with which we regard them now.

But the mere recognition of the interpolations does not decide the question as to the antiquity of the original histories, in which they have been inserted.

It is necessary to consider more carefully some of the special points instanced by the Bishop.

Some relate to words or phrases occurring in Deuteronomy, which (as above mentioned), are unimportant. Such are the anachronism of the name 'Gilgal,' the expressions 'unto this day,' 'then in the land,' 'side of Jordan.'

The expression 'Shekel of the sanctuary,' Exodus xxx. 13, is cited as an anachronism. It is, however, followed by a late gloss; probably this expression is part of the gloss.

The expression 'strong west wind' in Exodus x. 19, is in the original (as stated by the Bishop), 'wind of the sea'; this the Bishop considers as necessarily inapplicable to Egypt, but applicable to Canaan, and, therefore, written in Canaan. But why may it not mean 'north-west wind' which would satisfy every condition?

The expression, 'before any king of Israel,' (Genesis xxxvi. 31,) being in the nature of undefined contrast, does not necessarily imply that there was a king in the writer's time. Had it been 'before Saul was king,' it would have been different.

The citation of the word 'prophet,' in the earlier books, as an anachronism, reference being made to 1 Samuel ix. 9, is certainly without foundation. Samuel's book asserts that the word 'prophet' had

not been used, but the assertion is clearly limited to its meaning as *soothsayer*. Where it occurs in the earlier books it is not in the sense of soothsayer.

The book 'Jasher' is cited in the history of Joshua and in the history of David, therefore, says Bishop Colenso, the history of Joshua was written in David's time. But was it not probable, even before this question was raised, that the book 'Jasher' was a continuous history, a series probably of Pontifical Annals, in which the events of each year or priesthood were noted as they occurred ?

I cannot undertake to discuss every instance of this kind, nor do I think all worth the trouble of discussion. I have taken the most prominent instances, and I am confident that they present no sufficient reason for asserting that any important parts of the Tetrateuch were written in the later times.

(VI.) We have now prepared ourselves, in some measure for entering upon the great question :— After deducting acknowledged interpolations, were the first four books of the Pentateuch put in their present form about the time of Moses ? or about the time of Samuel, David, and Solomon ? And, in particular, will the supposition of the later of the two dates explain the intermixture of accounts by two writers (or, perhaps, by more), whose writings differ so much in character ? And will it remove the ap-

parent inconsistency (so very often cited by Bishop Colenso), between the statement in Exodus vi. on the introduction of the name Jehovah, and the preceding histories ?

The first step must be, if possible, to settle the date of the Elohist account. In Colenso's part v., page 74, will be found the reasons which have induced him to fix on the time of Samuel. There are abundant and convincing reasons for asserting that the date could not be later than Samuel's ; but when the reader examines those which the Bishop adduces for asserting that it could not be earlier, I am confident he will be struck with their weakness. As far as I can see the assertion depends entirely on this :—that, whereas in the first instance (Genesis xli. 15) Manasseh is mentioned as senior to Ephraim, yet afterwards, (namely, in the Elohist passage, xlviii. 5), Ephraim is mentioned first ; and this order is supposed to indicate the political superiority which (as we know) was afterwards obtained by the tribe of Ephraim, and, therefore, in the Bishop's judgment, proves that Genesis xlviii. 5, must have been written after that political superiority had been obtained. Yet, in the Jehovistic passage, four verses above it, Manasseh is mentioned before Ephraim. This inversion by a later writer, in the sense opposed to the Bishop's argument, shews clearly that no inference

whatever can be drawn from the mere order of names, and the whole argument falls to the ground.

The tendency of the Jehovistic legend which follows (on the discrimination of the sons of Joseph by Jacob) is perfectly compatible with the supposition that even the Jehovistic narrative existed at the departure from Egypt, for (Numbers i. 33, 35) the tribe of Ephraim was then the more numerous. At the end of residence in the desert, the order had changed (Numbers xxvi. 34, 37).

The Elohist's fixation of Abraham's cemetery at Hebron, is considered, by the Bishop, as a flattery to David, whose reign began there. This interpretation appears to me very feeble.

Bishop Colenso has not fully discussed the specific question of the age of the Jehovist; but the amount of family details in his history would, at first sight, justify the idea that it could not be very late.

I will now advert to the Bishop's idea that the Elohist and the Jehovistic accounts were successively produced from the same school or college by two generations of priests or priestly persons who, in all probability, were personally acquainted (the names fixed on as probable being Samuel, Nathan, Gad). And here is to be remarked that accounts are placed side by side, Elohist and Jehovistic, which are wholly

inconsistent ; not only long accounts such as those of the Creation, each occupying a chapter or more, but also short accounts each occupying a verse in the same history. Thus, Genesis vi. 19 (Elohistic), is inconsistent with Genesis vii. 2 (Jehovistic). In some places, clauses not absolutely inconsistent, but ascribed to the two different sources, occupy portions of the same verse ; there are a great many instances of this in Genesis xxx. I can hardly imagine that the same priestly dynasty, in the fulness of power, would publish these to their country as parts of the one Book of Law.

But still more striking is the difference of subject and style to which Bishop Colenso has well drawn attention. The Elohistic narration gives history on rather a broad scale ; the Jehovistic enters at great length into family details such as the frivolous transactions of Jacob with Laban, and the minutiae of the history of Joseph. The Elohistic does not go far into geography ; the Jehovistic goes extensively into oriental geography. The Elohistic is throughout grave in its character ; the Jehovistic is sometimes very offensive, even unproducible (to this I shall allude again). It is utterly inconceivable to me that two series of history, so different as these, can have originated from the same school, with no more difference of times and persons than is mentioned

above, and with every reason, political and religious, for maintaining general consistency. And I am amazed that the Bishop has promulgated this theory as tending in any degree to remove the seeming difficulties in the mixture of the accounts.

It appears to me, that the theory which I have advocated in the beginning of these notes (namely, that the Elohist part is essentially Egyptian, and the Jehovistic is essentially Canaanitish, Syrian, or Arabian), does, in great measure, remove the difficulties. The Egyptians, as we well know, were not wanderers, either for the sake of commerce or for any other purpose; even the Israelites fixed in Egypt would find difficulty in crossing the frontier. This circumstance would limit the geographical knowledge and the family details of Syrian life in the Egyptian account. The Egyptian histories, their religious rites and their ordinary customs, as far as we know them, appear to have been grave and reasonably pure, and in this respect strongly contrasted with the licentiousness and indecency of the nations north-east and east of them. The rites of the Syrian temples were most lascivious; the character of the Arabs has always been remarked as extremely libidinous; (see Gibbon's 'Decline' &c. chapter 1, marginal abstract 'Private Life of Mahomet,' foot-note). The Introduction to the 'Arabian Nights' cannot be

quoted in society. The Israelites in Goshen had become Egyptian (witness their devotion to the golden calves), and the traditions, which they preserved among themselves, would, probably, have Egyptian gravity; while those which Moses or others might impart from Syria would be licentious.

It seems to me also, that the character of the Jehovistic account in its family aspect agrees with this supposition. That account must have been formed and kept up in Syria, where the family events took place; it would scarcely last through the migration to Egypt. As to Nathan and Gad finding it after so many disturbed generations, or inventing it, I look upon both these suppositions as impossibilities. I should suppose that Jacob's migration to Egypt did not include all, or any large proportion, of the persons interested in the family histories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, up to that time. And all who were left behind would preserve, in all the unnecessary details of oral tradition, the legends of their principal ancestors. These were ready for collection by Moses, either in excursions from the scene of his exile in the desert, or on his approach to the frontier of Canaan in command of the Israelites. Noah's flood, and his migration to Canaan (as I interpret it), related to both countries, and traditions of them were to be found in both

countries, which were combined sometimes inconsistently.

Bishop Colenso lays most urgent, and as appears to me, most unmerited stress, upon the statement in Exodus vi., that the name Jehovah was not known to Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob. As regards the Elo-histic account which precedes it, this is perfectly correct, the name Jehovah is not mentioned. As regards the Jehovistic account, it is to be remarked that the negation does not apply to mankind generally, and, therefore, does not affect the histories of Eve, Enoch, and Noah. In the history of Jacob, the name occurs so rarely that it may be the effect of accident ; and, as formerly suggested, he might almost be considered as the only ancestor of the Goshenites, whose ignorance of the name could be matter of interest to their historian.

But the following may, most probably, have been the course of formation of the history. Moses, a learned man, had collected the mythologies, the histories of creation, &c., both of the Egyptians, and of the Syrians. In the latter, he had found the sacred name. Its origin, whether Phœnician or from any other source, is of no importance. He had also collected, among his own people, the important parts of the history of their principal ancestors ; but this history, derived from people who

were really Egyptians, would be in Egyptian or Elohist terms. Thus I imagine that, at the time of the Exodus, he was prepared with all the Elohist, and all the earlier Jehovistic parts of Genesis. By degrees, and probably terminating about the invasion of Moab, the remaining Jehovistic parts were obtained. The incorporation of these with the first accounts could not be undertaken by one who had so many charges as must have oppressed the spiritual, civil, and military guide of the people. It must have devolved upon others ; they would be unwilling to change a single word given to them by their great lawgiver ; and some inconsistencies would occur in the incorporation.

I believe that no real difficulty remains with respect to the words of Exodus vi. If any difficulty does remain, the suppositions of Bishop Colenso do not aid in the smallest degree to remove it.

Bishop Colenso is struck with the general purity of the Hebrew language of the Elohist record ; and seems to consider it incompatible with early composition. I do not join in this opinion. In a nation which (like the Israelite) has little communication with the rest of the world, language changes very slowly. The Greek through a very long period, the English during the last three hundred years, and the Welsh through a very long time, have changed little.

It seems not difficult to imagine that the ritual was altered with circumstances, and that the corresponding change of precepts would be introduced without exciting much attention. Thus I am not surprised at the appearance of the turtle-doves in a system of rites which began in the wilderness.

The Bishop has remarked, that a large portion of the early books is never cited at all in the later books of every kind; and he seems to infer from this, that the early books could not then be in existence. Yet reference to a well-known case seems to shew that this deduction has no foundation. On any supposition that has ever yet been made, Genesis i. and Exodus xx. 11, must have been known to the Deuteronomist. Yet in Deuteronomy v. 15, the existence of these is most carefully ignored, and a new reason is substituted for that in Exodus xx. 11. I conceive, therefore, that nothing whatever can be inferred from the silence of the later writers.

There are some unimportant passages in Bishop Colenso's books, which seem to argue more hasty reasoning than might have been expected. Thus, in reference to the ingathering in Exodus xxiii. 16, he says, 'the new year apparently began in Autumn.' Yet the command in Exodus xii. 2, makes it begin in

the month of Abib, which has always been understood as near the spring equinox; and the rules in Leviticus xxiii. fix the feast of tabernacles to the seventh month, 'when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land,' (not an early harvest, but the absolute termination of the latest gathering, Exodus xxiii. 16) which is perfectly consistent with a beginning of the year at spring time, and wholly irreconcilable with a beginning in autumn. The periods of agricultural labours nowhere determine the beginning of the year; thus, in England, though every farmer's lease begins in October, the civil year is always reputed to begin in January. The same mistake occurs in the interpretation of the times of Noah's flood.

Again, the Bishop has either written, or has cited from Zuch, 'According to the mythical representation, this heavenly vault is provided with a door, G. xxviii, 17. . . . And its glistening blue makes it appear as a crystal, sapphire-like mass, E. xxiv. 10.' Yet the former of these is merely Jacob's exclamation of wonder in a place where he had had a remarkable dream; and the latter is not given by the historian as any representation of any part of heaven, but as the appearance of that part of Mount Sinai which was beneath the wonderful

display which the elders of Israel conceived to be the embodiment of The Deity.

In closing my remarks on Bishop Colenso's work, I must again express my gratitude for the invaluable addition that he has made to Biblical Criticism, and my hope that he may apply, to the books of Exodus and Numbers, an Analysis similar to that which he has applied to Genesis.

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INDEX.

<i>Acton's Modern Cookery</i>	38	<i>Burke's Vicissitudes of Families</i>	8
<i>Aird's Blackstone Economised</i>	39	<i>Busk's Folk-lore of Rome</i>	34
Alpine Club Map of Switzerland	33	— Valleys of Tirol	32
Alpine Guide (The)	33		
<i>Amos's Jurisprudence</i>	10		
— Primer of the Constitution.....	10		
<i>Anderson's Strength of Materials</i>	19	Cabinet Lawyer.....	38
<i>Armstrong's Organic Chemistry</i>	19	<i>Campbell's Norway</i>	33
<i>Arnold's</i> (Dr.) Christian Life	29	<i>Cates's Biographical Dictionary</i>	8
— Lectures on Modern History	2	— and <i>Woodward's Encyclopædia</i> ...	5
— Miscellaneous Works	12	Changed Aspects of Unchanged Truths ...	13
— School Sermons	28	<i>Chesney's Indian Polity</i>	3
— (T.) Manual of English Literature	12	— Modern Military Biography.....	3
Atherstone Priory.....	34	— Waterloo Campaign	3
Autumn Holidays of a Country Parson ...	13	<i>Chubb on Protection</i>	39
<i>Ayre's Treasury of Bible Knowledge</i>	38	<i>Clough's Lives from Plutarch</i>	4
		<i>Codrington's Life and Letters</i>	7
		<i>Colenso on Moabite Stone &c.</i>	31
		—'s Pentateuch and Book of Joshua	31
		— Speaker's Bible Commentary ...	31
<i>Bacon's Essays, by Whately</i>	10	<i>Collins's Perspective</i>	26
— Life and Letters, by <i>Spedding</i> ...	10	Commonplace Philosopher in Town and	
— Works	10	Country, by A. K. H. B.	14
<i>Bain's Mental and Moral Science</i>	11	<i>Comte's Positive Polity</i>	8
— on the Senses and Intellect	11	<i>Congreve's Essays</i>	9
<i>Baker's Two Works on Ceylon</i>	33	— Politics of Aristotle	10
<i>Ball's Guide to the Central Alps</i>	33	<i>Conington's Translation of Virgil's Æneid</i>	36
— Guide to the Western Alps.....	33	— Miscellaneous Writings.....	13
— Guide to the Eastern Alps	33	<i>Contanseau's Two French Dictionaries</i> ...	14
<i>Bancroft's Native Races of the Pacific</i>	22	<i>Conybeare and Howson's Life and Epistles</i>	
<i>Becker's Charicles and Gallus</i>	34	of St. Paul.....	29
<i>Black's Treatise on Brewing</i>	38	Counsel and Comfort from a City Pulpit...	13
<i>Blackley's German-English Dictionary</i>	15	<i>Cox's</i> (G. W.) Aryan Mythology	4
<i>Blaine's Rural Sports</i>	36	— Crusades	6
<i>Bloxam's Metals</i>	19	— History of Greece	4
<i>Boulton on 39 Articles</i>	28	— School ditto	4
<i>Bourne's Catechism of the Steam Engine</i> .	27	— Tale of the Great Persian	
— Handbook of Steam Engine.....	27	War.....	4
— Treatise on the Steam Engine ...	27	— Tales of Ancient Greece ...	34
— Improvements in the same.....	27	— and <i>Jones's Teutonic Tales</i>	34
<i>Bowdler's Family Shakespeare</i>	36	<i>Crawley's Thucydides</i>	4
<i>Bramley-Moore's Six Sisters of the Valley</i> .	36	<i>Creasy on British Constitution</i>	3
<i>Bramley's Dictionary of Science, Literature,</i>		<i>Cresy's Encyclopædia of Civil Engineering</i>	26
<i>and Art</i>	22	Critical Essays of a Country Parson	14
<i>Bray's Philosophy of Necessity</i>	11	<i>Crookes's Chemical Analysis</i>	24
<i>Brinkley's Astronomy</i>	18	— Dyeing and Calico-printing.....	27
<i>Brown's Exposition of the 39 Articles</i>	28	<i>Culley's Handbook of Telegraphy</i>	26
<i>Brunel's Life of Brunel</i>	7		
<i>Buckle's History of Civilisation</i>	3		
— Posthumous Remains	12		
<i>Buckton's Health in the House</i>	24		
<i>Bull's Hints to Mothers</i>	39	Dead Shot (The), by <i>Marksman</i>	37
— Maternal Management of Children .	39	<i>De Caisne and Le Maout's Botany</i>	23
Burgomaster's Family (The)	34	<i>De Morgan's Paradoxes</i>	13
<i>Burke's Rise of Great Families</i>	8	<i>De Tocqueville's Democracy in America</i> ...	9
		<i>Disraeli's Lord George Bentinck</i>	7

<i>Disraeli's</i> Novels and Tales	34	<i>Helmholtz's</i> Scientific Lectures	18
<i>Dobson</i> on the Ox	36	<i>Helmley's</i> Trees, Shrubs, and Herbaceous Plants	23
<i>Dove's</i> Law of Storms	18	<i>Herschel's</i> Outlines of Astronomy	18
<i>Doyle's</i> Fairyland	25	<i>Holland's</i> Fragmentary Papers	20
<i>Drew's</i> Reasons of Faith	29	Recollections	7
<i>Eastlake's</i> Hints on Household Taste	26	<i>Howitt's</i> Visits to Remarkable Places	32
<i>Edwards's</i> Rambles among the Dolomites	33	<i>Hullah's</i> History of Modern Music	23
Elements of Botany	22	<i>Hume's</i> Essays	11
<i>Ellicott's</i> Commentary on Ephesians	29	Treatise on Human Nature	11
Galatians	29	<i>Ihne's</i> History of Rome	5
Pastoral Epist.	29	<i>Ingelow's</i> Poems	35
Philippians, &c.	29	<i>Jameson's</i> Legends of Saints and Martyrs	25
Thessalonians	29	Legends of the Madonna	25
Lectures on Life of Christ	28	Legends of the Monastic Orders	25
<i>Evans's</i> Ancient Stone Implements	22	Legends of the Saviour	25
<i>Ewald's</i> History of Israel	30	<i>Jelf</i> on Confession	29
<i>Fairbairn's</i> Application of Cast and Wrought Iron to Building	27	<i>Jenkin's</i> Electricity and Magnetism	19
Information for Engineers	27	<i>Jerram's</i> Lycidas of Milton	35
Treatise on Mills and Millwork	27	<i>Jerrold's</i> Life of Napoleon	1
<i>Farrar's</i> Chapters on Language	13	<i>Johnston's</i> Geographical Dictionary	16
Families of Speech	13	<i>Jukes's</i> Types of Genesis	30
<i>Fitzwygram</i> on Horses and Stables	36	on Second Death	30
<i>Forbes's</i> Two Years in Fiji	32	<i>Kalisch's</i> Commentary on the Bible	30
<i>Fowler's</i> Collieries and Colliers	38	<i>Keith's</i> Evidence of Prophecy	30
<i>Francis's</i> Fishing Book	36	<i>Kerr's</i> Metallurgy, by <i>Crookes</i> and <i>Rohrig</i>	27
<i>Freeman's</i> Historical Geography of Europe	6	<i>Kingdon</i> on Communion	30
<i>Freshfield's</i> Italian Alps	32	<i>Kirby</i> and <i>Spence's</i> Entomology	20
<i>Froude's</i> English in Ireland	2	<i>Knatchbull-Hugessen's</i> Whispers from Fairy-Land	34
History of England	2	Landscapes, Churches, &c. by A. K. H. B.	13
Short Studies	12	<i>Lang's</i> Ballads and Lyrics	35
<i>Gairdner's</i> Houses of Lancaster and York	6	<i>Latham's</i> English Dictionary	14
<i>Ganot's</i> Elementary Physics	19	Handbook of the English Lan- guage	14
Natural Philosophy	19	<i>Laughton's</i> Nautical Surveying	18
<i>Gardiner's</i> Buckingham and Charles	3	<i>Lawrence</i> on Rocks	22
Thirty Years' War	6	<i>Lecky's</i> History of European Morals	5
<i>Gilbert and Churchill's</i> Dolomites	32	Rationalism	5
<i>Girdlestone's</i> Bible Synonyms	29	Leaders of Public Opinion	8
<i>Goodeve's</i> Mechanics	19	Leisure Hours in Town, by A. K. H. B.	13
Mechanism	19	Lessons of Middle Age, by A. K. H. B.	13
<i>Grant's</i> Ethics of Aristotle	10	<i>Lewis's</i> Biographical History of Philosophy	6
Graver Thoughts of a Country Parson	14	<i>Liddell and Scott's</i> Greek-English Lexicons	15
<i>Greville's</i> Journal	1	<i>Lindley and Moore's</i> Treasury of Botany	23
<i>Griffin's</i> Algebra and Trigonometry	20	<i>Lloyd's</i> Magnetism	20
<i>Grove</i> on Correlation of Physical Forces	18	Wave-Theory of Light	20
<i>Gwill's</i> Encyclopædia of Architecture	26	<i>Longman's</i> Chess Openings	39
<i>Harrison's</i> Order and Progress	9	Edward the Third	2
<i>Hartley</i> on the Air	18	Lectures on History of England	2
<i>Hartwig's</i> Aerial World	21	Old and New St. Paul's	26
Polar World	21	<i>Loudon's</i> Encyclopædia of Agriculture ...	28
Sea and its Living Wonders	21	Gardening	28
Subterranean World	21	Plants	23
Tropical World	21	<i>Lowndes's</i> Engineer's Handbook	27
<i>Haughton's</i> Animal Mechanics	19	<i>Lubbock's</i> Origin of Civilisation	22
<i>Hayward's</i> Biographical and Critical Essays	7	<i>Lyra Germanica</i>	31
<i>Heath</i> on Energy	20		
<i>Heer's</i> Switzerland	22		
<i>Helmholtz</i> on Tone	22		

<i>Macanlay's</i> (Lord) Essays	2	<i>Müller's</i> Science of Language	12
History of England ..	2	Science of Religion	5
Lays of Ancient Rome ..	25, 35		
Life and Letters	7		
Miscellaneous Writings ..	12		
Speeches	12	New Reformation, by <i>Theodorus</i>	4
Works	2	New Testament, Illustrated Edition	25
<i>McCulloch's</i> Dictionary of Commerce	16	<i>Northcott's</i> Lathes and Turning	26
<i>Macleod's</i> Principles of Economical Philo-			
sophy	10		
Theory and Practice of Banking ..	38	<i>O'Connor's</i> Commentary on Hebrews	30
<i>Mademoiselle Mori</i>	34	Romans	30
<i>Malleon's</i> Genoese Studies	3	St. John	30
Native States of India	3	<i>Owen's</i> Comparative Anatomy and Physio-	
<i>Marshall's</i> Physiology	24	logy of Vertebrate Animals	26
<i>Marshman's</i> History of India	3		
Life of Havelock	8		
<i>Martineau's</i> Christian Life	31		
Hymns	31		
<i>Maunder's</i> Biographical Treasury	37	<i>Packe's</i> Guide to the Pyrenees	33
Geographical Treasury	37	<i>Pattison's</i> Casaubon	7
Historical Treasury	38	<i>Payen's</i> Industrial Chemistry	26
Scientific and Literary Treasury ..	37	<i>Peutner's</i> Comprehensive Specifier	39
Treasury of Knowledge	37	<i>Pierce's</i> Chess Problems	38
Treasury of Natural History ..	38	<i>Plunket's</i> Travels in the Alps	32
<i>Maxwell's</i> Theory of Heat	19	<i>Polé's</i> Game of Whist	38
<i>May's</i> History of Democracy	2	<i>Prendergast's</i> Mastery of Languages	15
History of England	2	Present-Day Thoughts, by A. K. H. B. ...	14
<i>McVillie's</i> Digby Grand	34	<i>Proctor's</i> Astronomical Essays	17
General Bounce	34	Moon	17
Gladiators	34	Orbs around Us	17
Good for Nothing	34	Other Worlds than Ours	17
Holmby House	34	Saturn	17
Interpreter	34	Scientific Essays (New Series) ..	20
Kate Coventry	34	Sun	17
Queen's Maries	34	Transits of Venus	16
<i>Mendelssohn's</i> Letters	8	Two Star Atlases	17
<i>Mennis's</i> Forest Trees and Woodland		Universe	16
Scenery	23	Public Schools Atlas	16
<i>Merivale's</i> Fall of the Roman Republic ...	4	Modern Geography	16
General History of Rome	4	Ancient Geography	16
Romans under the Empire	4		
<i>Merrifield's</i> Arithmetic and Mensuration ...	19		
Magnetism	18	<i>Rawlinson's</i> Parthia	5
<i>Miles</i> on Horse's Foot and Horse Shoeing		Sassanians	5
on Horse's Teeth and Stables	37	Recreations of a Country Parson	13
<i>Mill</i> (J.) on the Mind	10	<i>Redgrave's</i> Dictionary of Artists	25
(J. S.) on Liberty	9	<i>Reilly's</i> Map of Mont Blanc	32
Subjection of Women	9	Monte Rosa	33
on Representative Government ..	9	<i>Reresby's</i> Memoirs	7
Utilitarianism	9	<i>Reynardson's</i> Down the Road	36
's Autobiography	7	<i>Rich's</i> Dictionary of Antiquities	15
Dissertations and Discussions	9	<i>River's</i> Rose Amateur's Guide	22
Essays on Religion &c.	28	<i>Rogers's</i> Eclipse of Faith	29
Hamilton's Philosophy	9	Defence of Eclipse of Faith	29
System of Logic	9	Essays	9
Political Economy	9	<i>Rogel's</i> Thesaurus of English Words and	
Unsettled Questions	9	Phrases	14
<i>Miller's</i> Elements of Chemistry	24	<i>Ronald's</i> Fly-Fisher's Entomology	37
Inorganic Chemistry	19	<i>Rothschild's</i> Israelites	30
<i>Minto's</i> (Lord) Life and Letters	7	<i>Russell</i> on the Christian Religion	6
<i>Mitchell's</i> Manual of Assaying	28	's Recollections and Suggestions ...	2
Modern Novelist's Library	34		
<i>Monsell's</i> 'Spiritual Songs'	31	<i>Sanders's</i> Justinian's Institutes	10
<i>Moore's</i> Irish Melodies, illustrated	25, 35	<i>Savile</i> on Apparitions	13
Lalla Rookh, illustrated	25, 35	on Primitive Faith	29
<i>Morant's</i> Game Preservers	21		
<i>Morell's</i> Elements of Psychology	11		
Mental Philosophy	11		
<i>Müller's</i> Chips from a German Workshop. ...	12		

<i>Schellen's</i> Spectrum Analysis	18	<i>Tyndall's</i> American Lectures on Light ...	20
<i>Scott's</i> Lectures on the Fine Arts	24	Belfast Address	19
Poems	24	Diamagnetism.....	20
Papers on Civil Engineering	28	Fragments of Science.....	19
<i>Seaside</i> Musing, by A. K. H. B.	13	Lectures on Electricity	20
<i>Seeborn's</i> Oxford Reformers of 1498.....	3	Lectures on Light	20
Protestant Revolution	6	Lectures on Sound	20
<i>Sewell's</i> Passing Thoughts on Religion.....	31	Heat a Mode of Motion	20
Preparation for Communion	31	Molecular Physics.....	20
Stories and Tales	34		
Thoughts for the Age	31	<i>Ueberweg's</i> System of Logic	11
<i>Shelley's</i> Workshop Appliances	19	<i>Ure's</i> Dictionary of Arts, Manufactures, and Mines	27
<i>Short's</i> Church History	6		
<i>Simpson's</i> Meeting the Sun.....	32	<i>Warburton's</i> Edward the Third	6
<i>Smith's</i> (Sydney) Essays	12	<i>Watson's</i> Geometry	19
Life and Letters.....	8	<i>Watts's</i> Dictionary of Chemistry	24
Miscellaneous Works ...	12	<i>Webb's</i> Objects for Common Telescopes ...	18
Wit and Wisdom	12	<i>Weinhold's</i> Experimental Physics.....	19
(Dr. R. A.) Air and Rain	18	<i>Wellington's</i> Life, by Gleig	8
<i>Southey's</i> Doctor	13	<i>Whately's</i> English Synonymes	14
Poetical Works.....	35	Logic	11
<i>Stanley's</i> History of British Birds	26	Rhetoric	11
<i>Stephen's</i> Ecclesiastical Biography.....	8	<i>White and Donkin's</i> English Dictionary... ..	15
<i>Stirling's</i> Secret of Hegel	11	and <i>Riddle's</i> Latin Dictionaries ...	15
Sir William Hamilton	11	<i>Wilcocks's</i> Sea-Fisherman	36
<i>Stonehenge</i> on the Dog.....	36	<i>Williams's</i> Aristotle's Ethics.....	10
on the Greyhound	36	<i>Willis's</i> Principles of Mechanism.....	26
Sunday Afternoons at the Parish Church of a University City, by A. K. H. B.	13	<i>Willoughby's</i> (Lady) Diary.....	34
Supernatural Religion	31	<i>Wood's</i> Bible Animals	22
<i>Swinbourne's</i> Picture Logic	10	Homes without Hands	21
		Insects at Home	21
<i>Taylor's</i> History of India	3	Insects Abroad	21
Manual of Ancient History	6	Out of Doors	21
Manual of Modern History	6	Strange Dwellings	21
(<i>Jeremy</i>) Works, edited by <i>Eden</i> . ..	31		
Text-Books of Science.....	20	<i>Yonge's</i> English-Greek Lexicons	15, 16
<i>Thomson's</i> Laws of Thought ..	11	Horace.....	35
<i>Thorpe's</i> Quantitative Analysis	19	<i>Youatt</i> on the Dog	36
and <i>Muir's</i> Qualitative Analysis ...	19	on the Horse	36
<i>Todd</i> (A.) on Parliamentary Government... ..	2		
and <i>Bowman's</i> Anatomy and Physiology of Man	24	<i>Zeller's</i> Socrates	5
<i>Trench's</i> Realities of Irish Life	12	Stoics, Epicureans, and Sceptics... ..	5
<i>Trollope's</i> Barchester Towers.....	36		
Warden	36		







